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HANDBOOK

FOR THE

Beginner's Home Study

IN THE

Word of God.

BY

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PREFACE.

This book was written that it might be placed into the hands of adults who need and desire, or are willing to accept, an instruction in the Christian doctrine. A pastor or missionary is not always, perhaps even rarely, able to personally give such instruction in a measure really adequate. He looks about for a book which he might put into the hands of those whom he wishes to instruct. Naturally he thinks of the Bible History and a short exposition of Dr. M. Luther's Small Catechism. Could better books be found? Certainly not. But I would ask everyone that has had some experience in the matter, if the desired end can be gained by these books. Are they *read and studied*,—especially the exposition of the Catechism? Without a doubt, the answer will be a more or less modified No. A teacher is needed.

Now, in order to supply my own want, as well as that of others, I have in this book compiled a very brief Bible History and a short exposition of the Catechism, and have given it in the manner in which I have for years instructed adults. I have endeavored to speak simply and intelligibly to everyone. I do not take for granted either human learning or religious knowledge. Only in the latter part of the book I expect the reader to have some spiritual understanding. I have tried to hold the reader's attention. The Bible History is given in the words of Scripture. The exposition of the Catechism is that of the church of the true faith, and addresses the reader in the manner of a teacher. The arrangement of the material may be seen from the Contents, and conforms to the conceptions of those who know little or nothing of the Christian doctrine.

I commend this book to the Lord of the Church.

C. M. ZORN.

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PART ONE.



CHAPTER I.

The Natural Knowledge of God.

THERE IS A GOD.

You know this. Everybody knows this. For everyone beholds the wonderful creation. Hence every person knows that there must be a God, a wonderful God, who has created all things, and still preserves them.

The Bible therefore says: "That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse," Rom. 1, 19. 20. "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God," Hebr. 3, 4.

WHAT IS GOD?

God is an invisible being, a *Spirit*. "God is a Spirit," says the Bible, John 4, 24. You cannot see God, nor should you imagine that He has this or that appearance. God has no body, as we have; He is incorporeal.

God is *eternal*. He is without beginning and without end. He is from everlasting to everlasting. The Bible says: "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God," Ps. 90, 1. 2. God is unchangeable, ever and eternally the same. "Thou art the same," Ps. 102, 27.

God is *omnipresent*. He is everywhere. There is no place where God is not. In the Scriptures God says of Himself: "Am I not a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord," Jer. 23, 23. 24. And the Bible says: "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into

heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me," Ps. 139, 7—10.

God is *almighty*. He can do all things, even such as appear utterly impossible to you. "With God nothing shall be impossible," Luke 1, 37.

God is *omniscient*. He knows all things. His is an infinite knowledge and wisdom. The Bible says: "O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising. Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. . . . If I say, Surely, the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee," Ps. 139, 1—4. 11. 12.

God is *holy*. He is not unholy, or sinful, as we are. His holiness is without a spot. Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts," says the Bible, Is. 6, 3.

God is *just*. He does no one an injustice. He wrongs no man. He rewards the good, and punishes the evil. "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces," Dan. 9, 7.

God is *truthful*. God does not deceive. Whatever God says is the truth. Whatsoever He promises He will carry out. "For the Word of the Lord is right; and all His works are done in truth," Ps. 33, 4.

God is *benevolent, merciful, and gracious*. "God is love," says the Bible, 1 John 4, 8. God is love itself. He is an ocean of pure love. All the love you may find on earth is but a faint shadow of His love. — Later on we shall hear more of this, for we wish to talk of this expressly and at greater length.

Now all that has just been said of God you know, having a faint perception of it by nature. So much everybody knows. So much has been written in every man's heart. So much belongs to the natural knowledge of God.

Part of this, too, is THE NATURAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAW OF GOD.

Every man knows something, by nature, of the Law of God. The Law of God,— what is that? It is God's will as to how we

should be, and what we should do and not do. Of this every man knows something by nature. It is written in his heart.

This is shown by the *conscience*, which is found in every man, to a greater or less degree. If you do something good, you are satisfied. If you do something bad, your heart throbs, you have an evil conscience, even though no one else knows what you have done. Why is this? This is because you know about God and about the Law of God, because this has been engraved upon your heart.

Parental discipline also gives proof of the natural knowledge of God. Parents want to train their children unto good and away from evil.—Just so it is with the divine order of civil government, which, as the Bible says, “is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil,” Rom. 13, 4.—Proof of this, also, are the morals, or teachings of propriety, which are more or less in vogue all over the earth.

That everybody by nature knows about the Law of God is stated in the Bible in the following words: “For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men,” Rom. 2, 14—16.

So every man by nature has some knowledge of sin, and guilt, and the judgment of God after death. Therefore the Bible says of the godless and boldly sinning heathen: “Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death,” and: “Their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men,” Rom. 1, 32; 2, 15, 16.

Against this natural knowledge of God *atheism* wages war. Atheism is the insolent godlessness of those who, in contradiction to their own inborn and better knowledge and to the voice of conscience, say, “There is no God.” Of these atheists the Bible says: “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works,” Ps. 14, 1.

The *idolatry* of the heathen also contends against this natural knowledge of God. Listen to what the Bible says about this:

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts,” Rom. 1, 21—24.

Still another enemy of this natural knowledge of God is modern *agnosticism*. Agnosticism is that shameless and wanton claim put forth by such as assert against their own inborn better knowledge and conscience: “As to whether there is a God or not, where the world comes from, whether there is a life after death or not, etc., nothing can be said or known by anybody as actually and undeniably true, and so we don’t want to know anything about this.” This agnosticism is fashionable to-day. To this agnosticism the words of Scripture apply: “Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind,” Rom. 1, 28.

And furthermore we find inimical to this natural knowledge of God the bold and unbridled *profligacy* of those who say, “Let us enjoy life! Life is short. Let us eat and drink, let us go whoring and carousing; for to-morrow we are dead!” Of such as these the Bible says: “Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them,” Rom. 1, 32.

Finally, all *indifference* whatsoever strives against the natural knowledge of God, to-wit, that careless life which people lead who want to be concerned only about earthly and temporal things; who are satisfied to let God alone, if He will let them alone; who do not regard the Law of God, think lightly of their conscience, hold the judgment of God in utter disregard, and who say, “I march in the big procession. Whatever becomes of the rest will become of me, too.”— How is this, you vain man? Is it to such an end you find it written in your heart that there is a God, an eternal, omnipresent, almighty, all-knowing, holy, just, truthful, benevolent, gracious, and merciful God? Is the Law of God written in your heart to this end, the Law that reminds you of your sin, and guilt, and the judgment to come?

TO WHAT END, THEN, SHOULD THE NATURAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD SERVE MAN?

It should serve man to the end that he may know, repent, and shun his sin, fear the judgment of God, and seek the Lord, if haply he might feel after Him and find Him.

The Bible says: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made by hands; neither is worshiped by men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us; for in Him we live, and move, and have our being," Acts 17, 24—28.

Seek, then, your God, O child of man, in deep earnest, with strong desire!

And I will show you a perfect way in which you can find Him.

CHAPTER II.

The Bible.

The natural knowledge of God, about which we have heard in the first chapter, is imperfect. True, it can and should persuade us to *seek God*. But for really *finding God*, that is, for knowing God fully, and truly, and in such a manner that we can cheerfully and happily take comfort in Him in life and death, in time and eternity,— for this, indeed, the natural knowledge of God is insufficient. Nor is it calculated to achieve this result. No doubt you are aware of this.

But God has given us a special, a revealed knowledge of Himself. It is the knowledge of God which is presented to us in the *Bible*. This is a perfect one. The knowledge of God which is given us in the *Bible* is entirely sure, safe, and reliable, firm and unchangeable, unwavering and unfaltering; it is more than abundantly sufficient, and expressly designed to give us a thorough and true knowledge of God, so that we can cheerfully and happily take comfort in Him in life and death, in time and eternity, in short,

that we may truly find God. Yes, indeed, such is the revealed knowledge of God which is presented to us in the Bible.

FOR, WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

The Bible is a book, or rather a collection of books and letters. These books and letters have been written at various times: before the birth of Christ and soon after the birth of Christ. And they have been written by various men. These men are called Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles. But everything, mark you! everything that these men wrote was given them by inspiration of the Holy Ghost: He made them write it. Therefore the Bible is really and truly the Word of God. Every word of the Bible is God's word. Hence the Bible is called the *Holy Scriptures*, or *Holy Writ*. And in this Bible, in this Holy Writ, in this His Word, God so reveals Himself to us, that, as I have said, we can know Him fully and truly, and in such a manner that we can cheerfully and happily take comfort in Him in life and death, in time and eternity,—that we can actually find God, find in Him our dear, our reconciled and gracious God, who saves us for evermore.

Will you carefully consider what I have just said about the Bible?

Briefly, then—*what is the Bible?* It is the Word of God, which the Prophets, in the time before Christ, and the Evangelists and Apostles, in the time soon after Christ, have written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to instruct us unto salvation through the right and true knowledge of God.

That, in the manner just described, it is the Word of God, this is what the Bible claims for itself.

The Bible says: “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were *moved by the Holy Ghost*,” 2 Pet. 1, 20. 21.

An apostle says in the Bible: “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth,” 1 Cor. 2, 13.

The Bible says: “And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by *inspiration of God*, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good

works," 2 Tim. 3, 15—17. My dear reader, here it is said that the Holy Scriptures can make you wise unto salvation "through faith which is in Christ Jesus." About Jesus Christ and faith in Him you may not know as yet. But you shall be fully told in this book. At present I will only say that faith in Christ Jesus is the full and true knowledge of God and reliance on Him.

When the Prophets introduce a statement in the Bible, they very often, and again and again, say: "Thus saith the Lord," or: "The word of the Lord came unto me," or something similar. To adduce an example, you may see this for yourself if you look up in the book of the Prophet Ezekiel, the 18th chapter. It begins with the words: "The word of the Lord came unto me." In v. 23 you read: "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should turn from his ways, and live?" So the Prophets show that they do not utter their own, but God's words.

And finally, when in later writings of the Bible words of former writers are quoted, you often read: "As the Holy Ghost saith," or: "Which the Holy Ghost spake by the prophet." See, for instance, Hebr. 3, 7, and Acts 28, 25.

Hence it is clear that the Bible claims for itself that it is God's Word, which the Prophets, in the time before Christ, and the Evangelists and Apostles, in the time after Christ, have written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to make us wise unto salvation through the right and true knowledge of God.

BUT HOW CAN A MAN KNOW ASSUREDLY THAT THE BIBLE ACTUALLY IS THE WORD OF GOD?

Yes, this is the great and important question upon which everything depends.

The answer is simple, plain, and brief.

It is this:—

If you want to know assuredly, if you wish to gain the certain and undoubting conviction that the Bible is God's Word, and its doctrine God's own truth and revelation, then,—hear now and take to heart what I say!—then you must seek God in full earnest, according to His will; and with such earnest and with such a desire you must read the Bible and learn to know its teachings. Then you will most assuredly gain the certain and undoubting conviction that the Bible is God's Word, and that its teachings are God's truth and revelation. Then you will *find* God in the Bible;

you will know God in all truth, and in such a manner that you can cheerfully and happily take comfort in Him in life and death, in time and eternity; you will find God your dear, reconciled, and gracious God, who saves you for evermore.

Will you also consider well what I have just now said?

That these things are as I have just presented them, is testified by the true and only Prophet and Apostle,¹⁾ whose servants all Prophets and Evangelists and Apostles are, and concerning whom they all wrote, and in whose name and power they all wrote, viz., *Jesus Christ*. He says: “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself,” John 7, 16, 17.

Let us consider these words of Jesus Christ a little.

First He says: “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me.” Jesus Christ in these words says that His doctrine and that of all of His Prophets and Evangelists and Apostles, in short, the doctrine of the Bible, is not gotten up and invented by them, but is the doctrine of *God*, of God, who sent Him.

Then He says: “If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” In these words He tells us how a man may know assuredly, and gain the certain and undoubting conviction that the Bible is God’s Word and teaching, and not man’s word and teaching. How? If a man will so read and contemplate the Bible and its doctrine that thereby he wants to *do God’s will*. But what is the will of God? We know what it is, for we have already heard of it. The will of God is, that we *seek God*, that we seek God in full earnest, that we might truly know Him and find Him. He, therefore, who reads and contemplates the Bible and its teachings in such a way that in so doing he seeks God, shall assuredly know, and gain the certain and undoubting conviction that the Bible is God’s Word and teaching.

So says Jesus Christ.

And this is what He means when He says: “Search the Scriptures!” John 5, 39.

Now, then, do the will of God, my beloved fellow-man! Seek God! Seek God in the Bible! Seek your God, O fellow-man, in

1) Deut. 18, 15—19; Hebr. 3, 1.

full earnest, with strong desire! Do be instructed by God's Book! Do the will of God! Seek God in the Bible! Doing so, you will find Him. Yea, most assuredly you will find Him! You will know Him in all truth, and in such a manner that you can cheerfully and happily take comfort in Him in life and death, in time and eternity; you will find in Him your dear, reconciled, and gracious God, who saves you for evermore. And thus you will know assuredly, and gain the certain and undoubting conviction, that the Bible is God's Word and teaching.

Did you fully understand me?

But, —

But if one reads the Bible differently; if he does not read the Bible in such a way that thereby he desires to do the will of God, and to seek and to find God; if he reads the Bible merely for pastime; or if a man even reads the Bible in such a way as to allow human reason to sit in judgment over this book, or to contradict it, — such a one will not find God in the Bible, nor will he gain the conviction that the Bible is God's Word; on the contrary, he will be offended at the Bible, it will be a stumbling-block to him, and he will become more and more estranged from God.

Remember this!

Do you want to read the Bible in such a way as to seek God therein, and find Him?

Then continue to read in this book. It will place before your eyes, very briefly and simply, the chief doctrines of the Bible, and so introduce you into the Bible.

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts,”
2 Pet. 1, 19.

CHAPTER III.

The Creation.

Let me begin by giving you an abstract of the Biblical account of the creation of heaven and earth and all that therein is.

The Bible gives the following account: —

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

“And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

“And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God divided the light from the darkness, and called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

“And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

“And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb, and the fruit tree: and it was so. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth. And God made the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

“And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth, and every winged fowl. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth: and it was so. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over all the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

“And God rested on the seventh day from all the works which He had made, and blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.”

And, in particular, about the CREATION OF MAN the Biblical account runs thus:—

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

“And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden. And out of the ground made He to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; and the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib the Lord God made a woman, and brought her unto the man.

“And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”

From the foregoing account you see that the almighty God made everything out of nothing, through His word; and you see how it was done.

About all of this human wisdom, though it investigate the matter ever so much and brood over it ever so long, can know nothing. But, nevertheless, it will investigate and brood, and it wants to be wiser than the Bible. However, it becomes foolishness. Let not that deceive you. Simply believe the Bible. “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear,” says the Bible Hebr. 11, 3. And of God it says: “He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased,” Ps. 115, 3.

From the foregoing account you also see that *man is the foremost of the visible creatures*. For unto man God Himself has prepared the body with great care; He gave him a rational soul; He made him lord of the earth; and, what is most important, He created man *in His own image*.

The question, Wherein did the image of God consist? the Bible answers as follows: *In blissful knowledge of God, and in perfect righteousness and holiness.* (Col. 3, 10; Eph. 4, 24.) Adam and Eve, the first people, had a pure, clean, clear, and unclouded knowledge of God. And this knowledge made them a reflex, an image, so to speak, of God: God's holiness and righteousness was reflected in them, and filled them with its divine light, and made them, also, perfectly holy, and righteous, and blissful,—O how blissful!

So much, briefly, about the *visible* creatures of God.

But there are also *invisible* creatures of God.

Among them THE ANGELS are foremost.

I will briefly tell you what the Bible says about them.

The angels have their abode in heaven. Matt. 18, 10; 22, 30.
— Where and how this heaven is the Bible does not tell us.

They are *rational spirits*. Throughout the Bible, wherever you may read of them, you will find the angels described as rational spirits.

And they are *holy*, and *sons of God*. Matt. 25, 31; Job 38, 7.

God *created them in the beginning*, when He created the heavens and the earth. Job 38, 4—7 you may read that the “sons of God,” the holy angels, were glad, praised God, and shouted for joy, when God so gloriously and wisely prepared the earth. Hence they were not created later than this.

And they were all *created at once, in large, uncounted numbers*. With them there is not man, woman, and child, as with us. They do not propagate their kind. They neither marry nor are given in marriage. Matt. 22, 30; Dan. 7, 10.

They also have no body, as we have, but they are *spirits*. Hebr. 1, 14. We cannot understand, now, how this is.

But they are *strong and powerful*. Ps. 103, 20. And they are *quick*. Dan. 9, 21—23. In a moment they can come from heaven to earth.

And they are *blissful, eternally blissful*. They always behold the face of God. Matt. 18, 10.

And *what do they do?* How do they live? What is their occupation? *They praise God, execute His commands, and serve men.* Ps. 103, 20. 21; Hebr. 1, 14. To praise God is infinite joy for them. In executing God's commands they find endless occupation. And in serving men there also is joy for them,—and

for us; if only we were fully aware of it! Many touching examples are told us in the Bible of how the angels serve us.

But there are also angels who are evil, fallen from God, and very unhappy. About these you shall hear in the next chapter.

About the invisible creatures of God, and especially the angels, human wisdom knows nothing. And human folly scoffs at them.

So much about the creation of heaven and earth.

CHAPTER IV.

The Fall.

In the foregoing chapter I have said that there also are evil angels who have fallen from God into perdition.

Let me tell you, briefly, what the Bible says about the **EVIL ANGELS**.

The evil angels were *created good and holy by God*. In the beginning they were numbered among the good angels, partaking of their nature and of their properties. But of their free will, and upon their own impulse they *fell from God*, and became evil. There are *very many* evil angels. One, however, is their *prince* and leader. He is called, the *Devil*, or *Satan*. By him came the first sin; he sins from the beginning, that is, he made the beginning of sin. As to *how* this was done, the Bible gives us not the least information. It merely reports *that* it was done. It says: "The devil sinneth from the beginning," 1 John 3, 8. "The devil abode not in the truth," John 8, 44. "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation," Jude 6. "Angels that sinned," 2 Pet. 2, 4. "And He (Jesus) asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion, for we are many," Mark 5, 9.

These evil angels are *eternally banished* from God. They are damned, and have no hope of salvation. True, at present they still have some restricted liberty, which permits them to come on earth; but the great day of judgment is coming, on which they shall be cast into hell for all eternity. The Bible says: "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day," Jude 6. And: "God spared not the

angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment,” 2 Pet. 2, 4.

Thus the evil angels became the *declared enemies of God*. They hate and blaspheme God. They seek to destroy the works of God. They are also *our enemies*. They are unceasingly intent upon drawing us with them down to perdition. Therefore the Bible says: “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour,” 1 Pet. 5, 8. “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,” Eph. 6, 12.

And now I must speak of the **FALL OF MAN**, which occurred in the garden of Eden, in Paradise.

This event the Bible recounts as follows:—

“Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field. And he said unto the woman,—”

But stop! What sort of a serpent was that? How could it talk?

That serpent was a serpent that the Lord God had made. But the *Devil, the evil spirit, was with her*. He had crept into Paradise, and hidden in the serpent, to tempt man unto sin, and so to plunge him into the same destruction in which he was with all his evil angels. He caused the serpent to speak; he spoke through the serpent and out of the serpent. This is witnessed by the Bible, Rev. 12, 9: “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.”

Now we will return to our Biblical narrative:—

“Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he (the Devil) said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

“And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

“And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

“And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

“And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

“And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

“And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

“And He said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

“And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

“And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done?

“And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

“And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

“Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

“And unto Adam He said, Cursed is the ground for thy sake. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. And He drove out the man; and He placed at the east end of the garden of Eden cherubims (angels), and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

This is the very simple account of Scriptures of that very sad and dire fall of man.

Shall we reflect a little on this account?

God had created Adam and Eve holy, and given them much happiness. Just think: the beautiful earth, the resplendent heaven, the Paradise, — all was theirs!

Now the Devil came, in the serpent, and sought to make them distrustful of God's word and command. Of what word and command? God had said unto them: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." God wanted His holy and happy children to manifest their obedience in this simple manner. If they failed to do this, they could not remain holy and happy children of God, but had to die. God told them this. Of this word and command Satan sought to make them distrustful, and to tempt them into disobedience; in this way he sought to make them fall from God and into sin.

Note how cunningly he went about this work. He came in the serpent, an animal that was known and liked of men. And he spoke the crafty and doubt-instilling words: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden?" As if to say: Indeed, does God not permit you to eat of every tree in the garden? Then why did He plant them? What reason might He have for doing so?

Did Adam and Eve know that there was a Devil and evil angels? I cannot tell. But they did know that a serpent cannot talk, and hence, that back of the serpent and in the serpent there was some other power. Nor was that power a good power, to be sure. Therefore they should not have listened to the serpent, that is, the Devil, at all.

But they did listen to him. Eve, whom the Devil had first addressed, said: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

The Devil saw that he had made an impression. He saw that Eve, and Adam too, wondered why God had forbidden to eat of that one tree, and what might be the secret of that tree. Had they not caught at the suggestion of the Devil? Upon this the

Devil took a firm hold. He said: "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." You see, he presented God to them as a liar, and as one who wanted to keep them in ignorance and servitude. And he promised them wisdom and grandeur like that of God.

And this fiery dart kindled. Yes, they took God to be a liar and His word to be deceitful. Indeed, they took God to be one who wanted to keep them in ignorance and servitude. And they wanted to know what He had concealed from them. They wanted to be as gods. And they cast away God's word and command, and they believed and followed the word of the Devil. And they did that thing which God had forbidden. "The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

That was the sin which Adam and Eve committed; and what a great sin that was! That was the fall of Adam and Eve; and what a deep fall that was!

Ignorant, frivolous, and insolent fools ridicule this so-called apple-stealing of Adam and Eve. Yes, back of this "apple-stealing" was the most complete fall from God. Back of it was the Devil himself. That certainly is clear, is it not?

For, now behold into what a miserable condition Adam and Eve had come immediately, through this their fall in sin and away from God.

Their eyes were opened now, and they knew that — they were naked. Unclean thoughts, like vultures, entered their hearts.

They heard the voice of the Lord God in the garden. And they fled from God, and hid themselves amongst the trees of the garden from the sight of Him who sees all, and who is present everywhere. Guilt, and evil conscience, and dread of God, together with mad folly, possessed them now.

God called Adam. And Adam lied: "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." God reproached Adam for falling into sin. And Adam put the fault of it on Eve, and, in the last instance, on God: "The woman whom *Thou* gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." God also reproved Eve. And Eve pointed to the

serpent. Untruthfulness and surly defiance against God now possessed their sinful hearts.

They had lost the image of God, and had become like unto the Devil. "He that committeth sin is of the Devil, for the Devil sinneth from the beginning," 1 John 3, 8.

And what were the consequences, the punishment for all this? Pain and troublesome labor upon an accursed earth, then death, and — a forbidden Paradise.

But the merciful God gave them one HOPE. And this hope He gave them in the words which, in their presence, He addressed to the serpent, or rather to the Devil hidden in the serpent: "I WILL PUT ENMITY BETWEEN THEE AND THE SERPENT, AND BETWEEN THY SEED AND HER SEED; IT SHALL BRUISE THY HEAD, AND THOU SHALT BRUISE HIS HEEL."

About these words I shall speak in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER V.

Sin.

In the last chapter we heard the Biblical story about the fall of our first parents.

Now we want to hear what else the Bible teaches concerning sin.

WHAT IS SIN?

Sin is every departure from God's Word, and Law, and command.

You have seen as much in the story of the fall of our first parents. God had given Adam and Eve His Word, and Law, and command, and Adam and Eve departed from that. Thus they sinned. To sin means to miss, to depart from God's Word. "Whoever committeth sin transgresseth also the Law: for sin is the transgression of the Law," 1 John 3, 4.

BY WHOM WAS SIN BROUGHT INTO THE WORLD?

By the *Devil*, who first departed from God, and by *man*, who of his own free will suffered himself to be misled by Satan into sin.

This, too, you have learned in the foregoing chapter. The Devil sins from the beginning. He made the beginning of sin. And the first man, Adam, has of his own free will suffered Satan to mislead him and Eve into sin. "He that committeth sin is of

the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning," the Bible says, as you already know, 1 John 3, 8. And on the other hand, the Bible also says: "By one man sin entered into the world," Rom. 5, 12.

Now note what I am about to ask and answer.

HOW MANY KINDS OF SIN ARE THERE?

There are two kinds: *original sin* and *actual sin*.

WHAT IS ORIGINAL SIN?

Original sin is that sin which we have *inherited* from Adam. *It is the total depravity of our whole human nature, by which we are robbed of that righteousness and holiness in which man was created, and are inclined toward all that is evil.*

You have seen that Adam, and Eve also, became sinful. This sinfulness of Adam was inherited by all the children of Adam when they were begotten of Adam and born of Eve. The Bible says: "Adam . . . begat a son in his own likeness, after his image," that is to say, a son who was sinful like Adam. Gen. 5, 3. And so it is with all men, for all men are descended from Adam. All men are sinful, like Adam. All men have inherited sin from Adam, and still inherit it. One of the Prophets says, in the Bible, through the Holy Ghost: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," Ps. 51, 5. An Apostle says in the Bible: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing," Rom. 7, 18. By saying, "in my flesh," he means: in my nature, as I have received it from father and mother. Jesus Christ says in the Bible: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." The meaning of these words is: Whatsoever is born of sinful parents is likewise sinful. Hence all men are sinful; all men have inherited sin.

Nor is original sin a small and trifling matter. Not by any means. It is not, for instance, to be considered a mere weakness of our nature, which would make us more or less inclined to sin, while, at the same time, we would still be possessed of many, or at least a few, good qualities. Not so. Original sin is the *total depravity of our whole human nature*. We are completely deprived of that righteousness and holiness in which God created the human nature. We are inclined toward all that is evil, and only toward that which is evil. All of us, without exception, must say with the Apostle: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing;" in my nature, as I have received it from

my parents, and farther back from Adam and Eve, there is no good thing, none whatever. The Bible says: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," Gen. 8, 21. Be sure to understand. A man may be a good man in the eyes of other men. And he may be better than many others. But in the eyes of God, and hence, in truth, the nature of every man is totally depraved and an abomination.

That is original sin.

Now WHAT IS ACTUAL SIN?

Actual sin is *every transgression of the divine Word, and Law, and command, in deeds, and words, and thoughts, and desires.*

Actual sin is original sin in its effects and workings.

Original sin is the wicked *kind* and *disposition* which we have inherited. Actual sin is the wickedness which *comes from* this wicked kind and disposition.

The Bible says: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies," Matt. 15, 19. These are actual sins.

And what is THE CONSEQUENCE OF SIN?

Death!

You have seen this in the Biblical story of the fall of our first parents. The Lord had said unto Adam: "In the day that thou eatest thereof" (of the forbidden tree) "thou shalt surely die." Eve said to the serpent: "Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." And when Adam and Eve had sinned, the Lord God said unto Adam: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," that is to say, thou shalt die. And the Bible says: "The wages of sin is death," Rom. 6, 23.

BUT WHAT, ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURES, IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD BY DEATH, THE WAGES OF SIN?

Thereby is to be understood God's wrath and disfavor, temporal death, and eternal damnation.

Yes, and listen, listen, I say, for I dare not conceal it: God's wrath and disfavor, temporal death, and eternal damnation, have already come upon all men *because of original sin*. Just as we have inherited sin, so we have also *inherited* God's wrath and disfavor, temporal death, and eternal damnation. Everybody is born into God's wrath and disfavor, into temporal death, and into eternal damnation, indeed, *born into this by nature*.

Yes, that is what the Bible, Holy Writ, God's Word, says. God says so.

In the Bible we not only read: “Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with Thee,” Ps. 5, 4, but in the Bible we also read: “We were *by nature* the children of wrath, even as others.” We furthermore read: “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,” Rom. 5, 12. And finally we read: “By the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation,” Rom. 5, 18.

And so it is. You can see very well that, as all men are born into sin, so they are also born into death. For all men must die. The new-born babe makes no exception. But where there is death, there is also God's wrath and disfavor. There, also, is eternal damnation. For the dying of a sinner is the dark path to eternal damnation.

How much more have we deserved God's wrath and disfavor, temporal death, and eternal damnation by all our actual sins which we have committed and still do commit.

So it is. So says the Bible.

And as for you, do not rebel, do not philosophize, do not brood upon this, but *seek salvation!*

For there is salvation, as you have already heard in the story of the fall.

CHAPTER VI.

The First Gospel.

Into the very night of sin, and the darkness of death, into which Adam and Eve had come so quickly, the Lord God caused a star of hope to shine.

The Lord God gave THE FIRST GOSPEL.

“Gospel,” originally perhaps “good spell,” is a translation of “evangel,” which is of Greek derivation, and means, “a good story,” “good news,” “good tidings.”

As you know, the Lord God, in the presence of Adam and Eve, had said to the serpent, or rather to the Devil concealed in the serpent: “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,” Gen. 3, 15.

Let me explain what kind of a gospel that was.

When the evil foe, the Devil, had succeeded in luring Adam and Eve, and with them the whole human race, to death, he rejoiced and thought that now he had gained a victory, and that the matter was decided forever.

But then the Lord God came and said: "I will put *enmity* between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." As if to say: Thou hast gained a victory at present, Satan, but not finally. The matter is not decided forever. I shall yet put an enmity, a battle, a war between thee and the woman, and between thy brood and her children. — It certainly was not agreeable news for the Devil, to hear that the matter was not yet decided, and that there should be another struggle. But for Adam and Eve this was gospel, good news.

And the Lord God continued and said to the Devil: "*It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*" As if to say: The outcome of this struggle will be, that one seed of a woman, one man born of woman, will put an end to thee, and deliver mankind; but thou wilt cause him much suffering. — It certainly was dreadful for the Devil to hear that his present victory was to be turned into a defeat, and the human race to be redeemed. For Adam and Eve, however, this was gospel, most glad and blessed tidings.

Note well: through *suffering*, through a sacrifice on His own part, that Seed of a Woman, that man born of a woman, was to conquer the Devil, to despoil him of his power over men, to redeem man from sin, from the righteous wrath of God, and from death, and eternal damnation.

But could this Redeemer be a mere man, and nothing more? Indeed? A man? A man conceived and born in sin, who would himself be subject to the righteous wrath of God, in the pit of death and eternal damnation, — should such a man be able to conquer the mighty Devil, despoil him of his power over man, and redeem all men from sin, from the righteous wrath of God, and from death and eternal damnation? Impossible! That was a work, forsooth, which God alone could accomplish.

Hence the Redeemer whom God here promised had to be *God Himself*.

But did not the Lord God say that a Seed of a Woman, a man born of a woman, and, hence, that a man was to do this?

Yes, and still, — only God could accomplish this. Hence this Seed of a Woman, this man, had to be God. GOD HAD TO BECOME MAN, and redeem mankind.

This first Gospel could not be understood in any other way.

And so Adam and Eve did understand it. For when Eve bore unto Adam her firstborn son, she thought she now had the promised Seed of a Woman, and said: "I have gotten a man from the Lord," which words, in a literal translation, read: "I have gotten the man *the Lord*," Gen. 4, 1. She was mistaken in the *person*. Not *this* man was to be the God-man, the Redeemer. She was also mistaken in regard to the *time*. The God-man, the Redeemer, was not to come so soon, but much later. She was finally mistaken as to the *manner* of His birth. The God-man, the Redeemer, was not to be begotten of man, but to be merely the seed of a woman, a son of a virgin, as you shall hear later on. But Eve was *not* mistaken in the one main point: the Redeemer was to be a *man* who is the *Lord* — a *God-man*. God should become *man*, and the Redeemer of man. Adam and Eve understood the first Gospel correctly, and they believed it, and trusted in it.

The fact that the promised Seed of a Woman was to be God Himself, and that, therefore, the promised Redeemer was to be God-man, man and God in one person, — this fact was foretold by the Prophets with express words, and recorded in the Bible.

I shall only show you a few of these promises.

The royal Prophet David, when through Nathan he had received the promise that the Redeemer should be born of his family, burst forth into the question: "Is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" 2 Sam. 7, 14. The answer is too obvious to be expressly given by him. For this is evidently the manner of that Man who is the Lord God.

The Prophet Isaiah through the Holy Ghost sees the future Redeemer as though He had already come, and says: "Unto us a *child* is born, unto us a *son* is given: . . . and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, *The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace*," Is. 9, 6. The Prophet Jeremiah, speaking of the Redeemer, first speaks of Him as a mere human "Branch," and then says: "This is His name whereby He shall be called, *The Lord, our Righteousness*," Jer. 23, 5, 6. And again the Prophet Isaiah foretells the coming of the Redeemer, saying: "Behold, a *virgin* shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call

His name *Immanuel*,” “which being interpreted is, God with us,” Is. 7, 14; Matt. 1, 23.

And when the promised Seed of a Woman, the Redeemer, had at last come, and was born and had become a man, then His Apostle wrote concerning Him: “This is the true God, and eternal life,” 1 John 5, 20. And another Apostle first speaks of the Redeemer’s human descent, and then says: “Who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen,” Rom. 9, 5. And the Bible reports that still another Apostle worshiped before the Redeemer, who stood before him a true man, and said: “My Lord, and my God,” John 20, 28.

So you see from the Bible that the meaning of that first Gospel actually was this, that God should become man, and through suffering redeem man from the power of the Devil.

A wondrous Gospel!

CHAPTER VII.

The Holy Trinity.

My dear reader! In order that you may correctly understand the first Gospel, of which you have heard in the foregoing chapter, and that you may correctly understand the Gospel generally, God’s glad story of the redemption, I must by all means briefly acquaint you with the doctrine of the Bible concerning the Holy Trinity.

This is the doctrine which tells us who the true God is.

But I wish to say at the outset: In this doctrine God reveals things concerning Himself that are so peculiar, so wondrous, so singular, so incomprehensible to human reason, so far beyond all human conception, that all the world, and all human reason exclaims: Nay, that cannot be true! But, my dear reader, God *is* peculiar, wondrous, singular, incomprehensible to human reason, and far beyond all human conception. Therefore you dare not measure God according to your reason, and with your conceptions, and, as it were, carve out a God to suit you. If you do that, you have an idol and not the true God. You must know and believe God just as He reveals Himself in the Scriptures. If you do this, then you have the true God.

Who is the true God?

HE IS THE TRIUNE (three in one) GOD: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST; THREE DISTINCT PERSONS IN ONE DIVINE BEING.

So it is. This the Holy Scriptures say. This is the true God. Every other god is a false idol.

Now let me explain this a little, and prove it from the Bible.

Firstly, the Bible teaches firmly, decidedly, and uniformly that there is BUT ONE GOD, BUT ONE DIVINE BEING.

It is written in the Bible: "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord He is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else," Deut. 4, 39. God Himself says in the Bible: "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God," Is. 44, 6. It is written: "The Lord, our God, is *one* Lord," Deut. 6, 4. The Apostle writes: "There is none other God but *one*," Rom. 8, 4. And again he writes: "One God and Father of all," Eph. 4, 6. And again: "There is *one* God," 1 Tim. 2, 5.

And this also is most certain: There is but *one* God and Lord, who is a Spirit, who is eternal, omnipresent, almighty, all-knowing, holy, righteous, true, benevolent, merciful, and gracious. There is but *one* such divine Being.

But — now listen! — Holy Scriptures teach just as firmly, decidedly, and uniformly that in this one God, in this one and the same holy, undivided, and indivisible Being there are THREE DISTINCT PERSONS, who are called: FATHER, SON, HOLY GHOST.

I will tell you at once what I have to say on this, and give you the texts of Scripture.

Father, Son, Holy Ghost, — these are not merely three distinct names for one and the same divine Person. No, indeed! There are actually and truly three distinct Persons in God.

And these are the distinctions between the three Persons: —

The Father is He who begat the Son from eternity.

The Son is He who is from eternity begotten or born of the Father.

The Holy Ghost is He who from eternity proceeds from the Father and the Son.

These distinctions you must know and retain. You dare not confuse the three Persons, nor mistake them for one another. Whatever pertains to one individual Person simply pertains to that one Person, and not to the others.

In their divine Being, however, all three Persons are fully alike. No Person is before, or greater, or more prominent than the others. For every Person is just the one God.

And so there are not three Gods, but just one God; not three Lords, but one Lord.

You say you do not understand this? Nor do I understand it. Whoever says he understands this is foolish, and deceives himself. I think it altogether proper for us poor creatures not to be able to understand the majesty of the great God. If we could understand God, why, then God would not be greater than our reason. We only understand that which is earthly. But God is not earthly. Therefore we cannot understand Him. And therefore we should not fancy at all as though we had to understand God. Much less dare we say: I don't understand this, and therefore it cannot be so. That would be horribly and wantonly foolish. We should simply accept and believe what God in the Bible says concerning Himself.

And now recall the last chapter, and what you were told of the first Gospel. Recall that there you heard that God the Lord was to become man, born of a woman, of a virgin, and to become the Redeemer of mankind. Recall that here you also heard that God the Lord actually did become man born of a woman, of a virgin, and became the Redeemer of mankind.

Do you recall this?

Now hear!

God the Lord, who was to become man and did become man, who was to become the Redeemer of mankind and did become the Redeemer of mankind: He is the *Son*. The Father did not become man. Nor did the Holy Ghost become man. Only the Son became man and the Redeemer and Savior of man.

Note this, note this well!

And shall I still withhold from you the name of this Lord who became man, of this eternal Son of the eternal Father?

I will not. Here it is:

JESUS CHRIST.

And now you shall see that the Bible, Holy Writ, the Word of God, teaches all that you have just heard of the Holy Trinity. The *Holy Trinity* (tri-unity = three-oneness) — so God is called because there are *three* Persons in *one* and the same divine Being.

First look up the third chapter of this book. There the story of the creation of heaven and earth is told. There we read: "In

the beginning *God* created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the *Spirit* of God moved upon the face of the waters. And *God said*—.” Gen. 1, 1—3. Here are mentioned the three Persons of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Yes, you say, He who is called “*God*” may be the Father; and the “*Spirit*” or the Holy Ghost is mentioned, but where is the Son?

Answer: The Son is the *speaking God*, as you read: “*God said*—”

You will ask me whence I know this.

I know this from the Bible, and hence I know this from God Himself. John 1, 1—3. 14 you may read: “In the beginning was the *Word*, and the *Word* was *with God*, and the *Word* was *God*. The same was in the beginning with God.” [So you see, God was with God.] “*All things were made by Him*” [by the *Word*, you see, that was with God and that was God]: “and without Him was not any thing made that was made. And the *Word was made flesh* [man], and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the *only-begotten (Son) of the Father*, full of grace and truth.”

Here, you see, the Bible states that the speaking God was the Son.

And so the Bible sets forth the Holy Trinity upon its very first page, yes, in its first words.

It is because of the three Persons in God that God, when about to create man, said: “*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*,” Gen. 1, 26.

But you do not expect that in the small space of this book I can copy a thousand, or merely a hundred texts of Scripture proving this point.

I shall only mention a few of them.

The Son, the speaking God, the “*Word*,” which was with God and was God, became *man* and our Redeemer. You have just heard this. “*The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*,” John 1, 14. Now this Son, when He had finished His work of redemption, said to His disciples and Apostles: “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of*

the Holy Ghost," Matt. 28, 19. Do you here mark the three Persons in God?

The same Son said: "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me," John 15, 26. Do you here note the three Persons in God? And do you here see that, as has been shown before, the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father? And the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son also, for He is in fact and name, according to the Bible, also the Spirit of the Son. The Apostle says: "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts," Gal. 4, 6. And do you not here, too, see the three Persons in God?

And that the Father has from eternity begotten the Son, and that the Son is from eternity begotten, or born, of the Father, as was likewise shown above, you can see from the Prophet's record of the words which the Father addressed to the Son: "Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten Thee," Ps. 2, 7; Hebr. 1, 5. When here it says: "This day," the eternal, divine to-day is meant, God's ever-present eternity.

Finally let me tell you of one more great revelation of the Holy Trinity recorded in the Bible.

When Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in holy manhood, began His sacred office of redeeming us through much suffering from the power of the Devil, He was baptized. And when He had been baptized, the Spirit of God, the *Holy Ghost*, was seen like as a dove to descend and light upon Him. And the voice of the Father said from heaven: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Matt. 3, 16, 17.

Here, indeed, you can see the three distinct Persons of the Godhead plainly revealed; here also you see that the Son became the promised Seed of a Woman, the Slayer of the serpent, and our Redeemer and Savior. Accordingly the Apostle says: "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world," 1 John 4, 14.

Thus the doctrine of the Holy Trinity sheds a great light upon the first Gospel which you have learned to know; and therefore it was necessary for me to tell you about this doctrine.

O my dear reader! No doubt, many things still remain obscure to you. And you will be astonished and alarmed about many things you have heard. But read on, read on, with burning desire!

Call upon God the Holy Ghost to open unto you the Scriptures, the Holy Scriptures, and to open your heart also, that you might understand. Then most assuredly the day shall dawn, and the day star arise in your heart: you shall know the Holy Scriptures to be God's revealed Word, and you shall find salvation therein.

CHAPTER VIII.

The People of the First 1500 Years of the World.

As human wisdom knows nothing, and can know nothing, about the creation of the world, so it likewise knows nothing about the history of the people of the first 1500 years of the world. Much foolish stuff has been said and written about it, wild theories and wrong assertions have been put forth, especially to the effect that the people of those first ages were altogether rude, and uncouth, and like the brutes, and developed very slowly and gradually. The very reverse is true: in spite of sin, into which they had fallen and into which they were born, the people of the first period were most grand and efficient; but by continuing to lead a life of sin and ever more falling away from the Law of God and the Gospel they have gradually sunken deeper and deeper, and, in part, have become downright uncouth and barbaric.

Let me relate to you quite briefly and simply what the Bible, the Word of God, likewise very briefly and simply, relates about the people of the first 1500 years of the world.

After Adam and Eve had been expelled from Paradise they had very many children, sons and daughters. And these did not all remain with their parents, but were dispersed, and multiplied, and filled the earth.— It is self-evident that in the beginning brothers had to take their sisters in marriage. So God willed it. For God “hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.” So says the Bible, Acts 17, 26.

The first sons of Adam and Eve were named Cain and Abel. When Eve gave birth to Cain, she said: “I have gotten the man, the Lord,” because she thought she already had the promised Seed of a Woman who should bruise the serpent's head. Ah, but Cain was a very different man, who caused his parents much heartache, and in whom the hideousness of sin became very apparent. The following Bible-story will show you this:—

“And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

“And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord; and Abel of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof.”

Before I proceed with the story I shall have to say something on offerings, later called sacrifices.

It is plain that the Lord God not only gave Adam and Eve the first Gospel, but also instructed them to make offerings or sacrifices. From the first Gospel message men knew that God should become man, and through suffering and dying redeem man from sin, and God’s wrath, and death, and eternal damnation. That they might always bear this in mind, they were to sacrifice. That signified, firstly: In their divine service they were to slay a beast, and thereby remember that the promised Redeemer should so suffer and die for their sins. The offered animal thus was a type and sign of the coming Redeemer, who should for man and in the place of man bear sin, God’s wrath, death, and damnation. And it signified, secondly: They were to offer up the fruit of the field unto the Lord in thanksgiving for His great mercy. Hence the offered fruit also was a reminder of the coming Savior and His mercy. Thus the offerings were a typical divine service, instituted and ordained by God. And thus matters remained until the Redeemer actually came. Then, of course, the type, the picture, the sign, reached its fulfillment, its end.

Now I shall proceed with the Biblical story:—

“And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering” (because Abel was godly and sincere): “but unto Cain and to his offering He had no respect” (because Cain was an ungodly hypocrite).

“And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

“And the Lord said unto Cain” (I know not in what manner; possibly through a direct revelation, possibly through Adam): “Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

“And Cain talked with Abel, his brother:

“And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and slew him.” (That, perhaps,

was the first time that there was one dead on earth. Imagine the situation!)

“And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel, thy brother?

“And he said, I know not: Am I my brother’s keeper?

“And he said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hand; when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

“And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from Thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me.” (Notice the bad conscience of the wicked!)

“And the Lord set a mark on Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.” (I am not sure what sort of a mark that was.)

“And Cain went forth from the presence of the Lord” (from the place where God’s Word was proclaimed, and where the true service was held), “and dwelt in the Land of Nod.”

There his wife bore unto him a son, whom he called Enoch. And there he built a city, which he named Enoch, after his son. And so there grew up from Cain a wicked generation that dwelt apart from God and God’s Word. But in earthly affairs, in herding, in music, in the mining of ore, and in iron industry, this generation became great and renowned.

And Adam was 130 years old when there was born unto him a son whom Eve called *Seth* (Amends). “For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.”

Among the descendants of Seth God’s Word remained in vogue. There it took its abode. It was preached and heard among them. Hence, among the descendants of Seth there was a people of God which knew its sin and repented of it, and trusted in the promised Savior, and built its hope upon Him, and led a godly life. The descendants of Seth were therefore called “the sons (or children) of God” in the Bible, while the descendants of Cain, who had fallen and strayed farther and farther from God and His Word, are termed children “of men,” Gen. 6, 2.

Now the Bible has preserved unto us the names of the pa-

triarchs of this people of God, who in an unbroken line of father and son have lived throughout the first two thousand years of the world.

They are these: **ADAM, SETH, ENOS, CAINAN, MAHALALEEL, JARED, ENOCH, METHUSELAH, LAMECH, NOAH.** Noah's sons were: *Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

Of all these men it is said that they lived very, very long. Adam lived to be 930 years of age, Seth 912, Enos 905, Cainan 910, Mahalaleel 895, Jared 962. Concerning Enoch the Bible relates: "And Enoch walked with God. And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years. And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Methuselah lived to an age of 969 years, Lamech 777 years. When Lamech begat Noah he said: "This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." Likely he thought that Noah was the promised Savior, who should redeem mankind. But he was mistaken. Yet this speech clearly shows how his heart embraced the Gospel of God, and was full of firm faith.

Are you astonished at the long lives, the unheard-of long lives of these patriarchs, and doubtless of many of their contemporaries? Does that seem fabulous to you?— My friend, the Bible is the Word of God and tells no fables. Yes, men lived long in those first ages. And these men certainly lived just as long as the Biblical report says. One fain would say, it seems as though death could get no hold, could not so readily get hold on these beings sprung from Paradise. But, at any rate, as concerning the above-named patriarchs, I must say this: God wanted them to live so long, and as direct witnesses to preach the Word of God to the rapidly multiplying generation of their time. Consider that Adam only died when Lamech, the father of Noah, the last of the patriarchs, was 56 years old. What immediate information did the people of Noah's time have of the fall and of the Gospel message in Paradise! Such a direct spread of the Gospel was all-important in order that many, many might comfort themselves with the coming Redeemer, and live and die believing in Him. For he who lives and dies believing in the Redeemer is not lost. The example of Enoch went to show that God had eternal life in store for those who placed their trust and hope in His Word of mercy concerning the Seed of a Woman, concerning

Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Yes, the ten men whose names are given above were not only the forefathers of the people of God of those times, but their preachers as well unto faith in the Savior and unto eternal blessedness.

My friend, may you also accept the preaching of God's Word, and believe and hope in the Savior of the world; then you, too, most certainly shall enter eternal blessedness through *Jesus Christ*.

CHAPTER IX.

The Flood.

The descendants of Seth, the "sons of God," alas! did not remain good. They, too, fell away from God and His Word, until, finally, this apostasy became universal among them. They were entirely like the ungodly descendants of Cain, the "children of men."

Would you know how this came about?

The Bible says: "It came to pass that the sons of God" (the descendants of Seth) "saw the daughters of men" (the descendants of Cain) "that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose," Gen. 6, 2. There you have the explanation. They who had grown to manhood in the Church of God took ungodly wives, because they were pleasant to their eyes; and they would not be warned. So they themselves became estranged from God and His Word. And as to their children and descendants, they grew up without the Word of God, godless. Outwardly, however, in earthly and worldly affairs, they were successful. The Bible says: "They became mighty men which were of old, men of renown," Gen. 6, 4.

And so there finally came about a condition of things here on earth which the Bible describes as follows: "And the earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth," Gen. 6, 11. 12.

"But **NOAH** found grace in the eyes of the Lord." "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God," Gen. 6, 8. 9. This he did in a "generation" which was wicked and tempted him well-nigh beyond resistance. And Noah had three sons, as you know, **SHEM**, **HAM**, and **JAPHETH**.

When this was the condition of affairs on earth, something happened which the Bible relates in the following words.— But I shall only give you a brief outline of the Biblical account:—

“And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh” (that is, sinful and controlled by sin): “yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.” (As a time of repentance God would grant them another hundred and twenty years of life.)

“And God saw” (when this time of grace had expired) “that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And He said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.” (“It repenteth God” is an expression that is here merely fitted to the impressions and understanding of man. For in fact “God is not a man, that He should lie; neither a son of man, that He should repent,” Numb. 23, 19.)

“And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in it, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. The length of it shall be 300 cubits, the breadth of it 50 cubits, and the height of it 30 cubits. And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons’ wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee. And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

“Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.” (How much ridicule and mockery must have been poured over him through all the time that he was building that boat, the ark, and was preaching of its object, and of God’s impending judgment!)

“And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this gen-

eration. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

“And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him. And he was 600 years old. And he went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons’ wives with him, into the ark. Of the beasts there went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, as God had commanded him. And the Lord shut him in.

“And the same day were all the fountains of the deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. And the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail, and the mountains were covered.

“And all flesh in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.

“And Noah only remained, and they that were with him in the ark.

“And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

“And God remembered Noah, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged; the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; and the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated. And the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat.

“And Noah sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

“Also he sent forth a dove from him. But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned.

“And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove; and the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off.

“And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove, which returned not again.

“And Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

“And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons’ wives with him, and every beast.

“And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings.

“And the Lord said, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; *for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth.* While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

“And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you; neither shall there be any more a flood to destroy the earth. This is the token of the covenant: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud.—

“And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard.

“And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.

“And Ham, the father of *Canaan*, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father.

“And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And” (he was now filled with the Spirit of God, the Spirit of prophecy) “he said, Cursed be *Canaan*; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of *Shem*; and *Canaan* shall be his servant. God shall enlarge *Japheth*, and he shall dwell in the tents of *Shem*; and *Canaan* shall be his servant.

“These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread, and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

“And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years: and all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.”—

This is, in short, the Biblical account of the great and universal righteous visitation of God upon the ungodly world, which had fallen from Him and His Word. This occurred about the year 1656 after the creation of the world.

Most people laugh at this account, and do not want to believe it,—although traces of the flood can still be seen, unless one willfully shuts his eyes against them.

The writers of Holy Writ often take occasion by the flood to warn against a fall from God and His Word, and against wickedness. This was God's judgment upon the wicked then. What would it be to-day?

From Shem, Ham, and Japheth all men are descended that now live upon the earth. And as the Bible states, and according to plain evidence to-day, this happened just as Noah, through the Holy Ghost, foretold. The descendants of *Ham* and of his son *Canaan* are all they who, in the course of time, have been subjugated, and held in servitude and slavery. From *Shem* that people, particularly, was descended to whom, as you shall soon hear, God gave His Word and the true worship, the people whose Lord He therefore was in a most peculiar way, the people in whose midst the promised Savior became man. From *Japheth* chiefly the Europeans are derived, who spread over all the earth, and who, especially, and more than others, "dwell in the tents of *Shem*," that is, who belong to the Church of *Shem*: the Church that has in its midst the Word of the Redeemer Jesus Christ.

God grant that you, dear reader, may also, in all truth, dwell in the tents of *Shem*, and live and die and be saved as a child of God — through Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER X.

The Tower of Babel and the Confusion of Languages.

The continent of Asia is called the cradle of the human race. There was the Paradise; there the people first spread; there, too, are the mountains of Ararat, on which Noah's ark rested, and in the lowlands of which, in Armenia, Noah and his family dwelt and worshiped God.

But also among the descendants of Noah backsliding from God and His Word was soon becoming manifest. You have noticed that Ham and his son Canaan had already degenerated. But even with the house and tribe of Shem and Japheth matters did not continue well. And in the course of time the fall and ungodliness

again became great and general. The true children of God were but a little flock.

Now it came to pass that the people, the descendants of Noah, journeyed from Armenia, and farther eastward found a beautiful lowland, the land of Shinar, or Babylon. There they remained.

And there they said to one another: "Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

Now this was nothing but the haughty mind of the flesh, disdainful of God. They wanted to remain together, united in powerful union, without God, in spite of all the prophecies of Noah. And the city and the tower were to be the great central point, and the towering memorial of their union.

God saw this. And therefore the true God said thus: "Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they might not understand one another's speech."

So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of the earth; and they left off to build the city.

Therefore is the name of it called *Babel* (Confusion); because the Lord there confounded the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

This judgment of the Lord we have before us to the present day. Mankind is separated, divided; especially the fact that the various peoples of the globe have different languages makes each nation a peculiar one.

But the haughty mind of the flesh, disdainful of God, has remained. Man relies upon, and insolently boasts, his own strength, and power, and glory, and forgets God and wants nothing of Him.

But "He hath showed strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts," says the Bible Luke 1, 51. And that is demonstrated by the history of nations.

CHAPTER XI.

Abraham, the Forefather of the Chosen People of God.

All I have so far told you, of the Creation, the Fall, the First Gospel, the People of the First 1500 Years, the Flood, the Tower of Babel, and the Confusion of Languages and the scattering of the people, you will find recorded in the Book of Genesis, in the first eleven chapters.

In the following, however — sorry to say! — I shall have to be more brief, and to pass over the other accounts of the Bible with more rapid strides, as it were. Otherwise this book would become too large. This book, you know, is merely to contain the first elements and the most necessary things of the Christian religion, and to awaken in you a desire for more, and so to point you to the Scriptures.

Now, after the Flood, through the confusion of languages, the people were scattered into all lands.

From God and His Word they had again fallen, — well-nigh all of them: even the descendants of Shem.

But upon the descendants of Shem rested the prophecy, made through Noah, that God would be the Lord of Shem, and would build tents for all men in the family of Shem, and that the promised Redeemer should become man among the offspring of Shem.

Now, what did God do?

During Shem's lifetime God chose a man from among the descendants of Shem. And from this man God wanted to rear unto Himself a peculiar generation and people. And to this people He would give His Word and the true worship. And among this people the Redeemer should become man.

This chosen man was ABRAHAM.

Let me show you how Abraham was descended from Shem.

Shem's son was Arphaxad; his son was Salah; his son, Eber; his son, Peleg; his son, Reu; his son, Serug; his son, Nahor; his son, Terah; his son, Abraham. Abraham was born in the year 1949 after the creation of the world.

Let me also show you how the lifetime of men gradually decreased.

Shem lived 600 years; Arphaxad, 438; Salah, 433; Eber, 464; Peleg, 239; Reu, 239; Serug, 230; Nahor, 148; Terah,

205; Abraham, 175. — Abraham's forefather Shem lived thirty-five years after the death of Abraham.

Abraham dwelt with his father Terah in Ur of the Chaldees, in Western Asia, and later in Haran of Mesopotamia.

The name of Abraham's wife was SARAH. They had no children.

Now let me tell you very briefly some of the main features of the wonderful history of Abraham.

When Abraham was 75 years of age, the Lord said unto him: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee: *and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*" For of Abraham the promised Woman's Seed, the Redeemer, was to come.

So Abraham departed, and Lot, his brother's son, went with him. And when they had come into CANAAN, — in Western Asia, on the coast of the Mediterranean, — the Lord appeared unto Abraham and said: "Unto thy seed (descendants) will I give this land."

And Abraham built an altar unto the Lord, and called upon (preached) the name of the Lord.

And Lot chose all the plain of Jordan, the chief river running through Canaan, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.

After these events, years after, the word of the Lord came unto Abraham, saying, "Fear not, Abraham: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward."

And Abraham said, "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless?"

And the Lord said, "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: so shall thy seed be."

"*And Abraham believed the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness,*" that is, Abraham believed the promise of God concerning his seed and the future Redeemer; and so the Lord imputed the redemption, which the Redeemer should bring, unto Abraham, so that he had forgiveness of sin and eternal salvation through his faith.

Now when Abraham was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared unto him and said, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will establish my covenant be-

tween me and thee and thy seed after thee, to be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee. This is my covenant" (the mark, the "token" of my covenant) : "*Every man child in your generations that is eight days old shall be circumcised.*"

And soon after this the Lord appeared unto Abraham as he sat in the tent door. And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and he ran to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, and said, "My Lord, if now I have found favor in Thy sight, pass not away, I pray Thee, from Thy servant: and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts." They said, "So do, as thou hast said." Abraham hastened into his tent unto Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly, and make cakes." But he ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto the young man; and he hastened to dress it. And he set butter and milk before them, and the calf, and they did eat.

These three men were the Lord and two angels, in human form. The Lord, however, was God the Son, the "Speaking God." (See chapter vii.)

They said unto him, "Where is Sarah, thy wife?"

He said, "Behold, in the tent."

Then said the Lord, "I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life, and, lo, Sarah, thy wife, shall have a son."

Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him, and laughed within herself.

Then said the Lord unto Abraham, "Wherefore did Sarah laugh? Is anything too hard for the Lord?"

Then Sarah denied, saying, "I laughed not." For she was afraid. And He said, "Nay; but thou didst laugh." —

And the Lord went His way, as soon as He had left communing with Abraham, and the two angels came to Sodom at even. And Lot sat in the gate of Sodom. And Lot pressed upon them greatly, and they turned into his house. And he made them a feast, and they did eat.

But before they lay down, the men of the city compassed the house around, both young and old, and said, "Where are the men which came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them."

Lot went out and said, "I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly."

They said, "Stand back ! This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge." And they pressed sore upon Lot. And the men (the angels) put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

And the men said unto Lot, "Hast thou here any besides, in the city ? Bring them out of this place. For the Lord hath sent us to destroy it."

And Lot went out, and spoke to his sons-in-law, which married (were engaged to) his daughters. But he seemed unto them as one that mocked.

And when the morning arose, the angels hastened Lot. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and that of his wife and his two daughters, and brought them forth.

And the Lord, who had now come to them, said, "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee!"

Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire; and He overthrew all those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities. And Lot's wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.—

And Sarah bore unto Abraham a son, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called his son ISAAC, and circumcised him, being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

And God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering."

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and went unto the place of which God had told him. On the third day Abraham saw the place afar off. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac, his son; and he took the fire in his hand and a knife, and they went both of them together.

Then said Isaac, "My father, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

Abraham said, "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

And when they came to the place Abraham built an altar, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac, his son, and laid him

on the altar upon the wood, and stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

And the angel of the Lord (the Son of God) called unto him out of heaven, and said, "Abraham, Abraham, Lay not thine hand upon the lad: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

And Abraham looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and offered him up in the stead of his son.

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven; **AND IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED.**

To this the Apostle remarks: "He saith not, *And to seeds, as of many, but as of one,* And to thy seed, *which is Christ,*" Gal. 3, 16.

The Woman's Seed was to be the seed of Abraham.

CHAPTER XII.

Isaac, Jacob, and Judah, the Next to Receive the Promise.

Isaac was forty years old when he took to wife *Rebekah*, a kinswoman of his, who dwelt in Haran of Mesopotamia, as you may read Gen. 24.

And Rebekah bore twins; the first was red, all over like an hairy garment; therefore they called him *Esau*. His brother they called **JACOB**.

But before the children were born, God had said: "The elder shall serve the younger," Gen. 25, 23. Therewith it was declared that not Esau but Jacob should inherit the promise made to Abraham and Isaac. For to Isaac also God had given the same promise He had given unto Abraham, and had said: "Unto thee and unto thy seed I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham, thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will

give unto thy seed all these countries; AND IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED,” Gen. 26, 3. 4.

Now when the boys grew up, Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents, attending to domestic affairs and to herding.

And Isaac loved Esau: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

When Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, he called Esau, and said, “Take me some venison, and make me savory meat, such as I love, that my soul may bless thee before I die.” Thereby his only object was to endow Esau with the blessing of that great promise.

But Rebekah heard this, and she spake unto Jacob, “Fetch me two good kids of the goats, and I will make savory meat for thy father, such as he loveth: and thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may bless thee.” And he went and fetched. And his mother made savory meat, and took goodly raiment of Esau, and put them upon Jacob: and she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck. And she gave the savory meat into the hand of Jacob.

And he came unto his father and said, “My father!”

He answered, “Who art thou, my son?”

Jacob said, “I am Esau; eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.”

Then said Isaac, “Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.” And he said, “The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” And he discerned him not, and said, “Art thou my very son Esau?”

And he said, “I am.”

And he said: “Bring the venison near to me.” And he brought it near to him, and he did eat. And Isaac said, “Come near now, and kiss me, my son.” And he came near, and kissed him. And Isaac smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, “Be lord over thy brethren: cursed be everyone that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.”

And it came to pass, as Jacob had scarce gone out, that Esau came in from his hunting, and made savory meat, and brought it unto his father, and said, “Let my father arise, and eat of his son’s venison, that thy soul may bless me.”

Then his father said unto him, “Who art thou?”

He said, "I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau."

And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, "Who? Where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed."

Esau said, "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" And he lifted up his voice and wept.

Then Isaac answered, "Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth; by thy sword shalt thou live, and serve thy brother."

And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing, and said, "I will slay my brother Jacob."

And these words were told to Rebekah, and she sent and called Jacob, and said, "Arise, flee thou to Laban, my brother, and tarry with him until thy brother's fury turn away."

Then Isaac called Jacob, and said, "God Almighty bless thee, and give thee the blessing of Abraham."

Jacob went, and lighted on a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood above it, and said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham, thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed: **AND IN THEE AND IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED.**"

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and said, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." And Jacob took the stone, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of the place Bethel (House of God). And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone shall be God's house."

And Jacob came to Laban, and served him fourteen years for his daughters Leah and Rachel. Then he served him six more years for wages, and increased exceedingly in riches. And God said to Jacob, "Return unto the land of thy fathers, and I will

be with thee.” Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels, and came to Isaac, his father, in the land of Canaan.

Jacob, however, had twelve sons: *Reuben, Simeon, Levi, JUDAH, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulon, Joseph, and Benjamin.* These are the ancestors of the chosen people of God.

At this point the Bible tells a story about *Joseph*, which is found in the Book of Genesis from the 37th to the 45th chapter. This story is most remarkable, and beautiful, and instructive. Unfortunately I cannot take it into this book, because of its length. Read it in the Bible. In this story you are told how Joseph, out of envy, was sold by his brothers to slavetraders, who brought him to Egypt. There, after many wonderful guidances, he came to high honors, to be, in fact, the first man of the realm, next to Pharaoh (king), and the acting ruler of the whole land. After many years, in a famine, his brothers, coming there to buy grain, found him, and finally Joseph got his father, who during all these years had mourned him as dead, to come to Egypt with all his household.

And so Jacob, who was also called *ISRAEL*, took his journey into Egypt with all that he had. Then Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet his father. And when he saw him, he fell on his neck, and wept a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, “Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.” And Joseph nourished his father and his brothers in Egypt, and they grew and multiplied exceedingly.

And as it came to pass after these days, that Jacob should die, he gathered his sons together, and blessed them. And the Spirit of God moved him to predict and prophesy concerning future events.

To *Judah* Israel said, “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise.—The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, **UNTIL SHILOH COME**; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be,” Gen. 49, 8. 10. With these words Israel prophesied that Judah should have the rulership among the people of Israel, until the Shiloh, the Peacemaker, the Hero, the Slayer of the serpent, the Redeemer promised from the beginning of the world, should come from Judah and his descendants; and unto Him should the gathering of the people be.

So *Judah* was he who received the blessing of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and who together with them received the promise concerning Christ.

And the dying Israel said, “I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord!”

And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

Yes, he was gathered unto his people — unto the assemblage of all those who in their life had believed and heartily trusted the Gospel of God, and thus had been the children, the people of God.

O my reader! May you also belong to the people of God, that one day you may be gathered unto them! —

With all that I have just told you I have given you a general survey of, and understanding for, the things recorded in the first book of the Bible, the First Book of Moses, called Genesis. *Now read this book yourself!* But let me tell you, lest you take offense, that therein are also recounted some horrible sins of man, and many a great fall on the part of believers. God in His Word tells the *truth*. — And you will also find that the believers of those times, and of later times also, practiced polygamy.

CHAPTER XIII.

Moses.

“And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land (of Egypt) was filled with them.

“Now there arose a new king over Egypt” (not of the old line of Pharaohs), “which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also to our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.

“Therefore did they set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more

they multiplied and grew. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor.

“And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born” (to the children of Israel) “ye shall cast into the river.

“And a woman of the house of Levi bare a son, and hid him three months. And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river’s brink” (of the river Nile). “And his sister stood afar off to wit what would be done to him.

“And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews’ children.

“Then said his sister to Pharaoh’s daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

“And Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, Go!

“And the maid went and called the child’s mother.

“And Pharaoh’s daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.

“And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds. (Acts 7, 22.)

“And it came to pass, when Moses was grown” (forty years of age), “that he went out unto his brethren, and looked upon their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he slew the Egyptian. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian, and kept the flock of the priest of Midian.

“And he came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb (Sinai).

“And the angel of the Lord” (the Son of the Father: for He is often called the “angel” or messenger of the Lord) “appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And God called him out of the midst of the bush,

and said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them unto a land flowing with milk and honey. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.

“And Moses said, Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

“And He said, Certainly I will be with thee.

“And Moses said, But, behold, they will not believe me.

“The Lord said, What is that in thine hand?

“And he said, A rod.

“And He said, Cast it on the ground.

“And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand.

“And the Lord said furthermore, Put now thine hand into thy bosom.

“And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And He said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put it in again, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.”

“And the Lord said: It shall come to pass, if they believe not these two signs, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water shall become blood.

“And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, but of a slow tongue.

“And the Lord said, Now go, and I will teach thee what thou shalt say.

“And he said, My Lord, send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send.

“And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and He said, Is not *Aaron* thy brother? He shall be thy spokesman unto the people.

“And Moses went, and Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed, and bowed their heads, and worshiped.

“Afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go.

“Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. Get you unto your burdens!

“And Pharaoh afflicted the people still more grievously.

“And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and did the signs as the Lord had commanded. And Pharaoh hardened his heart, that he hearkened not unto them.

“And the Lord sent nine plagues upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt. But Pharaoh hardened his heart, neither would he let the people go.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, Every man, according to the house of their fathers, shall take a lamb without blemish, and shall kill it in the evening. They shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts, and on the upper door post of the houses. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it: with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord’s *passover*. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and smite all the firstborn, both of man and beast. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and I will *pass over* you, and the plague shall not be upon you. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations” (as a remembrance of past deliverance, and a picture of the coming Redeemer, who shall lead you and all men out of the power of the Devil, through His blood).

“And the children of Israel did so.

“And it came to pass that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. And there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

“And Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people. And the Egyp-

tians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.

“And the children of Israel journeyed forth, about 600,000 men, beside children.” (They had been in Egypt about four hundred years. Moses was eighty years of age.)

“And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light.

“And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and they pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea (the Red Sea). And the children of Israel were sore afraid, and cried unto the Lord. And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, the Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. And the angel (Son) of the Lord removed and went behind them, and the pillar of the cloud came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel, so that the one came not near to the other. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea” (as the Lord had commanded him); “and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

“And the Egyptians pursued and went in after them. And the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar, and troubled them, and took off their chariot wheels: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them. And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea. And the sea returned to his strength, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh; there remained not so much as one of them.

“Then sang Moses and the children of Israel a song unto the Lord.”

What I have told you in this chapter is a short abstract of the first fifteen chapters of the Book of Exodus, the second book of Moses.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Giving of the Law upon Sinai.

“And Moses brought the children of Israel from the Red Sea into the wilderness. And the whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron, and said, Ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel. Speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall have flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; I will rain bread from heaven for you.

“And at even the quails came up, and covered the camp; and in the morning, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said, It is *manna*. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat. And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited. And it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

“And the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day they came into the wilderness of *Sinai*. And there Israel camped. And the Lord said unto Moses, Sanctify the people, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day.

“And it came to pass on the third day that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And the Mount of *Sinai* was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the whole mount quaked greatly. And the voice of the trumpet waxed louder and louder.

“And the Lord spake all the words of the Ten Commandments:—

“I am the Lord, thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I, the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

“Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord, thy God, giveth thee.

“Thou shalt not kill.

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.

“Thou shalt not steal.

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor’s.

“And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

“And Moses went up into the mount (Sinai), and was in the mount forty days and forty nights.”

There God the Lord gave unto Moses the *Ceremonial Law* for the children of Israel, that is, the law for the Israelitish worship, especially as concerning the sacrifices; and the *Civil Law*, that is, the law respecting the civil order of things in Israel. The *Ceremonial Law* does not concern us any more, since it only pre-figured the promised Redeemer, and His work, and the true worship. But now the Redeemer has come. And the *Civil Law* is

not binding upon us, since that especially was given only for the children of Israel.

“And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, they gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, we wot not what is become of him.

“And Aaron said, Break off the golden earrings, and bring them unto me.

“And he received them, and made a molten calf.

“And they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And they offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people. Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them.

“And Moses besought the Lord, his God, and said, Lord, turn from Thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Thy people. And the Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people.

“And Moses went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables. And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses’ anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. And he took the calf, and burnt it, and ground it to powder, and strawed (strewed) it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink it.

“Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord’s side? Let him come unto me.

“And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

“And he said, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.

“And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses, and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

“And Moses hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into Mount Sinai, and took into his hand the two tables of stone. And the Lord wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

“And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai, behold, the skin of his face shone.”

About all the laws given on Sinai, especially about the typifying sacrifices, the Bible gives an account in the second and third book of Moses, the Books of Exodus and Leviticus.

CHAPTER XV.

The Ten Commandments according to the Version and Explanation of Luther's Small Catechism.

DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER, who was born in the year 1483, and died in the year 1546, preached the clear, true, and pure Word of God at a time when the Pope of Rome had well-nigh extinguished the light of God's Word on earth. Dr. Luther has also written the **SMALL CATECHISM** for the common people, both young and old. In this book he simply and briefly and beautifully comprehends the divine teaching in **SIX “CHIEF PARTS.”**

THE FIRST PART treats of the **TEN COMMANDMENTS**.

The Ten Commandments are the **LAW** of God, in which He tells us how we are to be, and what we should do and not do.

God already in creation has written His Law into the hearts of men, so that every man by nature has a knowledge of the Law. Through sin, however, this natural knowledge of the Law has become much darkened and very imperfect. Therefore God, at a later period, on Mount Sinai, gave His Law in ten commandments, wrote it upon two tables of stone, and had Moses proclaim it unto the children of Israel.

The *sum of the first table* is: “Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,” Matt. 22, 37.

The *sum of the second table* is: “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” Matt. 22, 39.

The end, the *sum total of all commandments*, is: “Charity out of a pure heart,” 1 Tim. 1, 5.

In his Small Catechism Luther has here and there given the Ten Commandments a form or version different from that indited by the finger of God upon the tables of stone. He has abbreviated the first three commandments, and what he has left out he has put in his definitions. Some things that pertain only unto the children of Israel he left out altogether.

Let me now show you the Ten Commandments as they are found in Luther's Small Catechism, and as they are defined there.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

Which is the First Commandment?

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

What does this mean?

“We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.” —

If we know God aright, as He has revealed Himself in the Bible, and truly fear, love, and trust in Him above all things, then we have Him as our God. But if we do not know God aright, and give to any creature the fear, love, and trust that is due to God alone, we have other gods before God. And this is what God forbids.

He says: “Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve,” Matt. 4, 10.

He says: “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell,” Matt. 10, 28.

He says: “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me,” Matt. 10, 37.

He says: “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord,” Jer. 17, 5.

He says: “For this ye know, that no . . . covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God,” Eph. 5, 5.

He that rightly examines himself will find that he does not fear, love, and trust in God above all things, as, according to the First Commandment, he should, and that therefore he is a sinner, who has deserved God's wrath and punishment. Every man, therefore, is in need of a Redeemer.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

Which is the Second Commandment?

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain.”

What does this mean?

“We should fear and love God, that we may not curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie, or deceive by His name; but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.”—

The name of God is all knowledge and every revelation of God, especially His Word, the Holy Scriptures, the Bible.

Now we should fear and love God, that we may not take that name in vain, nor misuse it.

We should not use the name of God for thoughtless exclamations (“My God!”—“By God!” etc.), nor for jesting and blaspheming.

We should particularly not *curse* by the name of God. You know what cursing is.

Neither should we *swear* by the name of God. When it is not consistent with the truth, and when it is not necessary, we should not call upon God to witness the truth and to avenge the untruth: for that is swearing.

Neither should we *use witchcraft* by the name of God. To use witchcraft is to use God’s name or Word for conjuring, fortunetelling, and consulting the dead, and other Satanic arts. God says: “There shall not be found among you . . . an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord,” Deut. 18, 10—12.

Neither should we *lie or deceive* by the name of God. That is, we should *not practice false doctrine about God*, for in that case we lie by the name of God; and we should *not practice hypocrisy*, for then we deceive by the name of God.

On the contrary, we should use the knowledge, and revelation, and Word of God to this end, that we may call upon Him in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.—Are you doing this? Really?

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

Which is the Third Commandment?

“Thou shalt sanctify the holy-day.”

What does this mean?

“We should fear and love God, that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred, and gladly hear and learn it.” —

In the Third Commandment God had commanded the children of Israel to sanctify Saturday, the seventh day of the week, as the Sabbath, or day of rest. This was, in the first place, a remembrance of the week of creation, the seventh day of which the Lord had blessed and hallowed, because on that day God had “ended His work which He had made, and rested from all His work which He had made.” It was for *man* that God had blessed and hallowed this seventh day, in order that henceforth he might enjoy His gifts, subdue the earth, and serve God in blissful rest. And in the next place, and chiefly, this commandment was a shadow of things to come, for it prefigured the future rest which the promised Woman’s Seed, the Savior, should bring to us, who, through Adam’s fall and our sins, had lost the rest given us by God in creation. — This was the Sabbath law of the children of Israel. And on the Sabbath they were also to gather for hearing God’s Word.

Now, however, that the promised Woman’s Seed has come and has brought the true rest, the Jewish Sabbath law, which was but its shadow and figure, is void. Therefore the Bible says: “Let no man therefore judge you . . . in respect of an holy-day, or . . . of the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ,” Col. 2, 16. 17. Upon us no particular holidays, no Sabbaths, are enjoined.

One thing, however, is enjoined upon us. One thing God graciously has commanded us for our temporal and eternal benefit. It is this, that we should *have preaching and God’s Word in our midst*. God says: “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,” Col. 3, 16. In public divine service the Word of Christ, the word concerning Christ, the Redeemer, should be richly preached among us, that we might hold to Him, our Redeemer, and be saved through Him. And in order that we may have such public services, such preaching of the Word of Christ, we should take time and rest from labor; unto this end we should set apart holidays and sanctify them. “Thou shalt sanctify the holy-day.”

And now for ages past Sunday has been singled out and hallowed for that purpose. And so we should sanctify this holy-

day, and should fear and love the gracious God who has given us His Word, that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred, and gladly hear and learn it. Together with the Psalmist we should say: "So will I compass Thine altar, O Lord: that I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all Thy wondrous works. Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honor dwelleth," Ps. 26, 6—8.

Say before God whether you have done or are doing this.

How highly have you valued preaching and God's Word heretofore?

How highly do you value it now?

Sinner, sinner, repent!

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

Which is the Fourth Commandment?

"Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

What does this mean?

"We should fear and love God, that we may not despise our parents and masters, nor provoke them to anger; but give them honor, serve and obey them, and hold them in love and esteem." —

This commandment marks the beginning of the second table, the sum of which is: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," or, as the Bible also puts it: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," Matt. 7, 12.

And our neighbor is every one who requires our love; even our enemy. The Lord Jesus Christ says: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," Matt. 5, 44, 45.

The Fourth Commandment tells us to give all love and all due honor to our parents — to father and mother, and all those who, according to God's ordinance, are placed over us in home, state, school, and church.

God is in deep earnest regarding this commandment. In His Word He says: "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and

the young eagles shall eat it," Prov. 30, 17. He says: "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power (the government), resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation," Rom. 13, 2. He says: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear," 1 Pet. 2, 18. He says: "Obey them that have the rule over you" (in the church), "and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you," Hebr. 13, 17. But He also says: "We ought to obey God rather than men," Acts 5, 29. Whenever, therefore, parents and masters demand something from us which is against God's Word, we dare not follow them.

It cannot be well with us, and we cannot live long upon the earth, if we do not observe the Fourth Commandment. On the other hand, wherever it is respected men prosper and lead a quiet and peaceful life.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

Which is the Fifth Commandment?

"Thou shalt not kill."

What does this mean?

"We should fear and love God, that we may not hurt nor harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need." —

Think not that you have kept the Fifth Commandment if only you have not murdered some one. God looks upon the heart. And therefore the Lord Jesus Christ says: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire," Matt. 5, 21. 22. And, moreover, God's Word says: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him," 1 John 3, 15.

God demands, on the contrary, that we should help our neighbor, and befriend him in every bodily need. Isaiah says: "Is it not to deal thy bread with the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that

thou cover him?" Is. 58, 7. God says: "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head," Rom. 12, 20.

How do you stand before the Fifth Commandment?

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

Which is the Sixth Commandment?

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

What does this mean?

"We should fear and love God, that we may lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed, and each love and honor his spouse." —

Matrimony was instituted by God after the creation of man. It is the lifelong union between one man and one woman unto one flesh. It is entered into by rightful and proper betrothal.

Marriage should, therefore, not be dissolved, annulled, put asunder. Only when one part has broken the marriage bond, the other is at liberty to be divorced. God's Word says: "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder," Matt. 19, 6. And: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery," Matt. 19, 9. — In what flagrant violations against this word of God does the world live!

He that lives in the state of matrimony should be faithful to his spouse, never forsaking the same, and certainly never secretly living in licentious connection with another.

He that does not live in the state of matrimony should avoid licentiousness.

"Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," Hebr. 13, 4.

But think not that God in this commandment refers only to the glaring sins of the flesh. No indeed. God wants all our words, and thoughts, and desires to be chaste and decent. He also forbids "filthiness, and foolish talking, and jesting, which are not convenient," Eph. 5, 4. The Lord Jesus Christ says: "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart," Matt. 5, 28.

With all our heart therefore should we suppress and fight our inborn lust, and flee and avoid every opportunity for uncleanness.

Who is pure in this respect?

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

Which is the Seventh Commandment?

“Thou shalt not steal.”

What does this mean?

“We should fear and love God, that we may not take our neighbor’s money or goods, nor get them by false ware or dealing, but help him to improve and protect his property and business.” —

You know what stealing is.

But do you know that this also is stealing, when one in any way takes advantage of his neighbor, in business or in trade? Would you like any one to take advantage of you? Of course not. Neither should you take advantage of others. — If you look at it rightly, the whole world is full of thieves, both great and small. The Bible says: “That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such,” 1 Thess. 4, 6.

I will give you a few Bible texts from which you may see all that God regards as stealing: —

“Woe unto him that useth his neighbor’s service without wages, and giveth him not for his work,” Jer. 22, 13.

“The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again,” Ps. 37, 21.

“Whoso is partner with a thief —,” Prov. 29, 24.

“If any would not work —,” 2 Thess. 3, 10.

God wants us to have such a heart and mind toward our neighbor, that, far from wanting to obtain his money or goods in an improper manner, we be earnestly intent and honestly concerned to improve and protect his property and business. We should not harm him, but help him. We should not take, but give.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

Which is the Eighth Commandment?

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

What does this mean?

“We should fear and love God, that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, nor defame our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.” —

“Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor,” says God, Zech. 8, 17. We should not be *deceitful* toward our neighbor. And in such deceitful and false way we

should not belie, betray, slander, nor defame him, and thus cause others to talk evil about him.

On the contrary, if we know something actually wicked about our neighbor, we should keep it secret from others, but reproach him with it in a kind and brotherly way. And if others speak evil about our neighbor, we should defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything. "Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy," says God, Prov. 31, 8, 9.

Most terribly widespread and common is the sinning against the Eighth Commandment. And who has that nice love for his neighbor, which covereth the multitude of sins, and believeth, and hopeth all good things of him? (1 Pet. 4, 8; 1 Cor. 13, 7.)

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

Which is the Ninth Commandment?

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house."

What does this mean?

"We should fear and love God, that we may not craftily seek to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, nor obtain it by a show of right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it."

This commandment is against avarice and miserliness. With that men seek and study to get their neighbor's inheritance and house, like the spider which, in its net, waits for the fly. And at the same time they are solicitous about observing a show of right, or even of piety. Against such the Lord Jesus Christ exclaims: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation," Matt. 23, 14.

Note what the Spirit caused the Apostle to write: "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows," 1 Tim. 6, 6—10.

Be not hasty to say that you have not such a disposition. Our wicked heart is a filthy pit full of evil lusts that are easily put into practice. And, at any rate, we all are sorely lacking in that love which looks upon the welfare of the neighbor. For the Holy Ghost says in the Bible: "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others," Phil. 2, 4.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT.

Which is the Tenth Commandment?

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor's."

What does this mean?

"We should fear and love God, that we may not estrange, force, or entice away from our neighbor his wife, servants, or cattle, but urge them to stay and do their duty." —

This commandment, like the ninth, forbids us to covet that which is our neighbor's, and shows fully and clearly that the mere evil lust is actual sin. We are so slow to comprehend that! "Thou shalt not covet!" Rom. 13, 9.

So we should be *holy* and *perfect*. Lev. 19, 2; Matt. 5, 48.

How shall we sinners stand before the commandments of God?

THE CLOSE OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

What does God say of all these commandments?

"He says thus: I the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments."

What does this mean?

"God threatens to punish all that transgress these commandments. Therefore we should fear His wrath, and not act contrary to them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these commandments. Therefore we should also love and trust in Him, and willingly do according to His commandments." —

Yes, God threatens to punish all that transgress these commandments. To the children of Israel He said: "I the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." But that was only a threat of temporal punishment.

which should show and demonstrate God's seriousness. Upon all such children that hated Him, and followed their parents in their iniquity He would also punish the sins of the fathers, here in time, and that, unto the third and fourth generation. And God has carried out this threat, as many examples go to show. Likely God does this to the present day. But when the children turned unto the Lord, this word applied: "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," Ezek. 18, 20. And that, too, obtains to the present day. But God's actual and real threat of punishment, which was not only intended for the children of Israel, but is intended for all people, is this: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of the Law to do them," Deut. 27, 26. In our chapter on "Sin" we have already seen how this curse fell upon all men, and what it contains.

Therefore, — and this is how things ought to be, — we should fear God's wrath, and not act contrary to His commandments.

But He promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these commandments. Unto the children of Israel He said, "I am . . . showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments." "Unto thousands of them," that is, forevermore, from generation to generation, eternally. And this is meant for us also.

Therefore, — and this is how things ought to be, — we should also love and trust in Him, and willingly do according to His commandments.

But, as matters are at present since the fall of our first parents, *can* we keep the commandments of God as God would have us keep them?

No. Since the fall man, in his natural condition, can in no wise keep the Law of God. And he who through faith has become a child of God can only keep it very imperfectly.

This is what God says in the Holy Scriptures.

He says: "They are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Ps. 14, 3.

He says: "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not," Eccl. 7, 20.

He says: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one," Job 14, 4.

And the Prophets and Apostles, the best men that ever lived, say: "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses

are as filthy rags," Is. 64, 6. And: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," Phil. 3, 12. And: "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified," Ps. 143, 2.

What purpose does the Law, then, serve, since we cannot keep it? With what intention did God give us the Law?

It is to effect a threefold object.

First, it is to check, in a measure, the gross outcroppings of sin, and thereby help to maintain outward discipline and decency in the world. For, since the Law of God, after all, does assert itself in the conscience of man, and is demonstrated by parental and civil government, it serves as a *curb*: it checks, curbs, restricts the sinful lusts of man, in a measure, lest they become actual deeds.

Secondly, and chiefly, the Law is to teach man the due knowledge of his sin. For since the Law teaches us God's will, as to how we should be, and what we should do and not do, it acts as a *mirror*: in it we see that we are not as we should be, that we do what we should not do, and are not doing what we should do. "By the Law is the knowledge of sin," Rom. 3, 20. This use of the Law is a very important and necessary one. For if we do not know our sin, we will, in entire heedlessness and carelessness, run into hell, and take no notice of the Gospel and the Redeemer. "The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ," says the Apostle, Gal. 3, 24.

Thirdly, the Law is to lead the children of God to know what are truly good works, such as God would have us do. For since—I repeat—the Law shows us God's will, as to how we should be, and what we should do and not do, it is therefore unto us who wish to serve God and do truly good works, a *rule*: in it we see what, in truth, God requires of us. Thus the Law guards us, while we mean to serve God, from doing things which God does not require, and does not delight in. Therefore the Holy Scriptures say: "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy Word," Ps. 119, 9.

Take heed, kind reader, unto the Ten Commandments of your God, and do not lose sight of them as long as you live!

CHAPTER XVI.

The Forty Years' Journey through the Desert and the Conquest of Canaan.

“And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man.

“And Moses sent them. And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with a cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff. And they returned after forty days, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. But we be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. We were in their sight as grasshoppers.

“And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God that we had died in this wilderness! Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt!

“And Joshua and Caleb, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes, saying, The land is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land. Only rebel not ye against the Lord.

“But all the congregation bade stone them with stones.

“And the glory of the Lord” (the pillar of cloud in which the Son of God was) “appeared before all the children of Israel. And the Lord said, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. As ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you. All that were numbered of you, from twenty years old and upward, shall not come into the land, save Caleb and Joshua. Your little ones, them will I bring in. But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in this wilderness forty years; and ye shall know my breach of promise.” — And so the people remained in the desert forty years, as the Lord had spoken.

“And the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way, and they spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For

there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread (manna).

“And the Lord sent fiery serpents” (whose bite produced a burning inflammation) “among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

“Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned. Pray unto the Lord, that He may take away the serpents from us.

“And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: every one that is bit, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

“And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.” —

“And Moses went up unto the mountain of Nebo. And the Lord showed him all the land (of Canaan). So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. And He (the Lord) buried him: but no man knoweth of his sepulcher. And the children of Israel wept for Moses thirty days.” —

“Now after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, the Lord spake unto JOSHUA, the son of Nun, Moses’ minister, saying, Now arise, go over this Jordan, unto the land which I do give them, even to the children of Israel. Unto this people shalt thou divide the land. Only be thou strong and very courageous. *This book of the Law*” (the five books of Moses) “shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night. For then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and thou shalt have good success.”

According to the *Book of Joshua*, which you may now read, Joshua led the people of Israel over the Jordan, and conquered the land of Canaan, and divided it unto the people of Israel. And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which He had sworn unto their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give it unto their seed; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass. This was about the year 2500 after the creation of the world, or about the year 1500 before the birth of Christ.

In the *Book of Judges* we are told of the happenings of the children of Israel in the first few centuries that they lived in the land of Canaan. The people were very unstable, and frequently fell from the Lord and His Word. “They did not destroy the nations (of Canaan), concerning whom the Lord commanded them: but were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions. Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against His people, insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance. And He gave them into the hand of the heathen: and they that hated them ruled over them. Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand. Many times did He deliver them; but they provoked Him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. Nevertheless He” (ever again) “regarded their affliction, when He heard their cry: and He remembered for them His covenant, and He repented according to the multitude of His mercies. He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.” Such is the account of that time by the Psalmist, Ps. 106, 34—46.

The men through whom the Lord in those times again and again delivered and helped His people were called “*judges*,” helpers, saviors.

How sinful even God’s people are! How merciful is the Lord!

CHAPTER XVII.

Samuel and Saul.

Next to the last of the judges of Israel was *Eli*, who was also high priest, that is, the highest priest of the land. The last judge was *Samuel*, who was also a prophet. Then there came kings over Israel, the first of whom was *Saul*.

I want to first tell you something about **SAMUEL**.

“There was a certain man, and his name was Elkanah. And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name

of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord" (at the temple), "and wept sore. And she said, O Lord of hosts, if Thou wilt indeed give unto Thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life. And as she continued praying before the Lord, Eli marked her mouth. Now Eli thought she had been drunken, and he said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? And Hannah answered, I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Eli said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition.

"And the Lord remembered her. And she bare a son, and called his name Samuel. And when she had weaned him, she brought the child to Eli, unto the house of the Lord. And the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest.

"Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial" (wicked men). "And Samuel was in favor both with the Lord and also with men.

"Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did. And he said unto them, Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father.

"And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said, Thus saith the Lord, Thou honorest thy sons above me. *Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.* In one day they shall die both of them.

"And Samuel was laid down to sleep in the temple of the Lord. And the Lord called Samuel. And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me.

"And he said, I called not; lie down again.

"And he went. And the Lord called yet again, Samuel! And Samuel arose, and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me.

"And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

"And the Lord called Samuel again, the third time. And he arose, and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me.

"And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child. Therefore he said, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if He call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth.

"So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the Lord called as at other times, Samuel! Samuel!

“Then Samuel answered, Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth.

“And the Lord said unto Samuel, Behold, I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken against his house: for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

“And Samuel feared to show Eli the vision.

“Then Eli called, and said, What is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee?

“And Samuel told him every whit.

“And he said, It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good.

“Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle. And the two sons of Eli were there with the ark of the covenant of God” (in which the two tables of the Law were kept). “And Israel was smitten. And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli were slain. And there ran a man out of the army, and told Eli, and said, Israel is fled, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also are dead, and the ark of God is taken. And when he made mention of the ark of God, he (Eli) fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died.” —

Now I will tell about SAUL.

“And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

“And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that all the elders of Israel came to Samuel, and said, Make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

“But the thing displeased Samuel. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

“And Samuel called the people together unto the Lord to Mizpeh, and said, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Ye have this day rejected your God. Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands.

“And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, Saul, the son of Kish (of the tribe of Benjamin) was taken” (by lot). “And when they sought him, he could not be found. Therefore they enquired of the Lord. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff. And they ran and

fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, all the people shouted, and said, God save the king!

“Then the Ammonite came up, and encamped against Jabesh-Gilead. And the Spirit of God came upon Saul, and he sent throughout all the coasts of Israel. And the fear of the Lord fell on the people, and they came out with one consent. And they slew the Ammonites, so that two of them were not left together.

“Samuel also said unto Saul, Thus saith the Lord, Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have. And Saul smote the Amalekites. But Saul and the people spared the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and of the lambs, and all that was good: but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly. Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he hath not performed my commandments.

“And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, I have performed the commandment of the Lord.

“And Samuel said, What meaneth, then, this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of oxen which I hear?

“And Saul said, The people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord, thy God; and the rest we have destroyed utterly.

“And Samuel said, Wherefore, then, didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord? *Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice*, and to hearken than the fat of rams. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king.

“And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirts of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine that is better than thou.—

“Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle. And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and there was a valley between them.

“And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, whose height was six cubits and a span.” (A cubit of the Bible is the length of a man’s forearm, from the elbow to the end of his middle finger. Hence Goliath was about nine feet tall.) “And the weight of his coat of mail was five thousand shekels of brass. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver’s beam.

“And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants.

“When Saul and all Israel heard those words, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid. And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

“Now *David* was the son of that Ephrathite of *Bethlehem-Judah*, whose name was *Jesse*; and he had eight sons. And the three eldest sons followed Saul to the battle. And *Jesse* said to *David*, Run to thy brethren, and look how they fare. And *David* went, and saluted his brethren. And, behold, there came up the champion *Goliath*, and spake the same words. And *David* spake, saying, Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God? And when the words were heard which *David* spake, they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him.

“And *David* said unto Saul, Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

“And Saul said unto *David*, Thou art not able to go to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

“And *David* said, The Lord will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.

“And Saul said unto *David*, Go, and the Lord be with thee. And Saul armed *David* with his armor, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And *David* essayed to go, and said unto Saul, I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them. And *David* put them off him.

“And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

“And when the Philistine saw *David*, he said, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?

“Then said *David*, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

“And David took a stone and slung it, and smote the Philistine, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon the earth. Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah pursued the Philistines. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way.”—

And Saul hated David, and sought his life, and persecuted him, and attempted to slay him, mainly because he thought that David would be king of Israel after him. And David was, in fact, appointed to that office by God. And David had to flee from before Saul, from one place unto another, and from one country unto another. As long as Saul lived, David had to suffer much from him; but God held His hand over David. Now all this you may read in the First Book of Samuel, beginning with the 18th chapter.

Finally, the Philistines again gathered their armies together for warfare against King Saul. And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim (the high priest), nor by prophets. Then Saul went unto a woman with a familiar spirit. This woman by means of her sorcery had a spirit to appear in the shape of the Prophet Samuel, who was now dead. This spirit said unto Saul, “Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?” And Saul answered, “I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.” Hereupon the spirit told him that in this war the Lord would deliver Israel into the hands of the Philistines. And to the king personally the spirit said, “And to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me.” The next day the children of Israel were smitten, and three of the sons of Saul were slain. Then Saul ordered his armor-bearer to thrust him through with the sword. And when the armor-bearer would not lay his hand upon the anointed of the Lord, Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. The Philistines cut off his head, and sent it round about the country. And they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-Shan.

And David became king of Israel.

CHAPTER XVIII.

King David.

David was of the tribe of Judah, and so he was a descendant of that *Judah* who had received the promise that the Woman's Seed, the seed of Abraham, the Savior, should be of his offspring.

David, the son of Jesse, was born at *Bethlehem*, a little town in the province of the tribe of Judah, in the year 1110 B. C. He lived to the age of seventy years, and reigned seven years at Hebron, and thirty-three at *Jerusalem*.

David was an excellent man, a man after God's own heart. He had a goodly appearance, and was bold and wise. He was God-fearing and tried in many tribulations. He was also a prophet of God. The Holy Spirit spoke through him. He composed many precious psalms, which you may read in the Bible. These psalms contain many prophecies concerning the Redeemer, concerning Christ.

Unto David personally it was prophesied that *Christ should come from his family*.

The Bible relates this event as follows:—

“And it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan (a prophet), saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, . . . When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever,” 2 Sam. 7, 4. 5. 12. 13.

There God said to David that after his death God would set up his seed after him, and would establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. And this seed, or descendant, or son, of David, who should be king forever, is the Redeemer, the Redeemer promised in Paradise of old, Christ, the *Messiah*, as He is termed in the Hebrew tongue.

David, too, so interpreted these words. For “according to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David. Then went King David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto? And this is yet a small thing in Thy sight, O Lord God; but Thou hast also spoken of

Thy servant's house *for a long while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?*" 2 Sam. 7, 17—19. Surely, so thought David, what has been said to me regarding that man who is to be my son exceeds the limits of man. It is too wonderful for me. *It is the manner of a man who is the Lord God.* And in many psalms David, through the Holy Ghost, prophesied concerning the Messiah, who should be both, his Lord and his son.

To this very thing all the Prophets testify who lived long after David.

Isaiah, seeing the future as though it were present, says: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the *throne of David*, and upon his kingdom," Is. 9, 6. 7. And Jeremiah says: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS," Jer. 23, 5. 6. And Ezekiel says: "Thus saith the Lord God, David, my servant, shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd," Ezek. 37, 21. 24.

So it was that the expected Redeemer, or Messiah, or Christ, was universally called "the Son of David" among the Jews. (Matt. 1, 1; 15, 22; 20, 30; 22, 42; 9, 27; 12, 23; 21, 9.)

So you see, after *Eve*, *Abraham* was the bearer of the great promise; after *Abraham*, *Isaac*; after *Isaac*, *Jacob*; after *Jacob*, *Judah*; after *Judah*, *David*. —

But this grand man David also fell grievously.

The Bible relates that as follows: —

"David sent Joab" (his commander-in-chief), "and his servants with him; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.

"And it came to pass in an eveningtide that David walked upon the roof of the king's house: and he saw Bath-sheba, the wife of Uriah, washing herself; and she was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent, and took her, and he lay with her.

"And David wrote a letter to Joab, saying, Set ye Uriah in

the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.

“And Joab assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were. And the men of the city went out and fought with Joab; and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

“And when the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she mourned. And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her, and she became his wife, and bare him a son.

“But the thing displeased the Lord. And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he said unto him :

“There were two men in one city ; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd; but took the poor man’s lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

“And David’s anger was greatly kindled; and he said, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die.

“And Nathan said to David, *Thou art the man.* Thou hast killed Uriah with the sword of the children of Ammon, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife.

“And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord.

“And Nathan said unto David, The Lord hath also put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born to thee shall surely die. And on the seventh day the child died.”

Then David prayed thus:—

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

“Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

“For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

“Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest.

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

“Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part Thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

“Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice.

“Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

“Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

“Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free Spirit.

“Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.

“Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness.

“O Lord, open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.

“For Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt offering.

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.

“Do good in Thy good pleasure unto Zion: build Thou the walls of Jerusalem.

“Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.”

While a king, too, David had to suffer much. Here is an instance:—

“And in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom” (David’s son) “for his beauty. And Absalom stood beside the way of the gate: And it was so, that when any man came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And when any man came nigh to do him obeisance,

he took him, and kissed him. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

“And Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow which I have vowed unto the Lord. The king said, Go in peace. And he went to Hebron. But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron. And the people increased continually with Absalom.

“And there came a messenger to David. And David said unto all his servants, Arise, and let us flee, lest he overtake us suddenly, and smite the city with the edge of the sword. And the king went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up. And all the people that was with him went up weeping. And, behold, thence came out a man of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, and cursed, and cast stones at David, and said, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial! Then said Abishai, Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. And the king said, Let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David.

“And Absalom, and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem. Then David arose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over Jordan. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. And David numbered the people, and gave all the captains charge, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom.

“And the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away. And Joab took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom. And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him.

“And the king was much moved, and wept, and said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God that I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!”—

“And David slept with his fathers, and Solomon, his son, reigned in his stead.”

CHAPTER XIX.

King Solomon, the Building of the Temple, the Division of the Kingdom, and the Babylonian Captivity.

Solomon was about twenty years of age at the time of his accession to the throne. He reigned forty years, and died at the age of about sixty. His reign was a reign of peace.

When Solomon became king, the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, and said: "Ask what I shall give thee."

Solomon said: "I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad."

And the speech pleased the Lord. And God said unto him: "Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, then I will lengthen thy days."

And Solomon was wiser than all men. He was also a prophet of the Lord, and by inspiration of the Holy Spirit he wrote three books contained in the Bible, namely, the Book of Proverbs; Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher; and the Song of Solomon.

He also built unto the Lord the most magnificent temple. Although all stones and all the timber was prepared beforehand, it still required seven years to build it. When Solomon dedicated this temple, the glory of the Lord appeared in a cloud and filled the house. And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord, and spread forth his hands toward heaven, and spoke an excellent prayer. The dedication of the temple was performed amid imposing splendor, with many sacrifices and glorious services. In conclusion, Solomon feasted the people splendidly for fourteen successive days.

But this wise King Solomon loved many strange, foreign women, and after the manner of the heathen he had many wives and concubines. This became a snare unto him. For when Solomon was old, his heathen wives turned away his heart after other gods, to build altars and high places for them.

For this reason the kingdom was divided after his death. His foolish son Rehoboam retained no more than two tribes, the tribes

of Judah and Benjamin. The other ten tribes chose Jeroboam to be their king. From that time on there were two kingdoms among the people of God, the Kingdom of *Judah*, and the Kingdom of *Israel*. The kings of Judah were descendants of David, and resided at *Jerusalem*; but the kings of Israel were of different families, and resided mainly at *Samaria*. This division of the kingdom occurred in the year 999 B. C.

Twenty kings reigned over Judah at Jerusalem, and among them there were eight pious kings. Nineteen kings reigned over Israel, and all of them were wicked.

Because of the sins of the kings and their people both kingdoms were destroyed: Israel by the Assyrians, and Judah by the Babylonians.

The Kingdom of Israel perished first, in the year 738 B. C., and its ten tribes were carried away captive. Its last king was Hoshea. He was defeated by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, who resided in the famous city of Nineveh.

Sennacherib, son of Shalmaneser, wanted to destroy the Kingdom of Judah also, and besieged the pious King Hezekiah within the city of Jerusalem. But the angel of the Lord delivered Hezekiah, and early in the morning the camp of the Assyrians before Jerusalem was strewn with dead corpses; and Sennacherib departed.

From that time on the Kingdom of Judah continued for more than a hundred years. But most of the following kings were wicked, and the people served other gods. Under the reign of King Manasseh especially terrible conditions prevailed. Finally, God caused His judgment to be visited upon the Kingdom of Judah also. He delivered it into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. He besieged Jerusalem at various times. First he carried away King Jehoiakim, and shortly after this, also Jehoiachin, his son, together with the princes and the strong men of the land, taking them captive to Babylon. A year later he caused the eyes of Zedekiah, the last of the Jewish kings, to be put out, after having first slain his sons before him. The magnificent temple of Solomon was burned. The city of Jerusalem was turned into a heap of stones. The people were deported like cattle to Babylon. All this was done about the year 600 B. C. And Jerusalem lay waste seventy years. This is called *the Babylonian Captivity*.

CHAPTER XX.

The Return from the Babylonian Captivity.

About the ten tribes of Israel, which were deported by the king of Assyria neither the Bible gives us any information, nor has anything come to light about them in the history of the world.

The Jews who were carried into the Babylonian captivity prospered considerably in earthly affairs. This may have been due to the circumstance that the Prophet Daniel rose to the highest power and honor in that land. The faithful, however, and they who were converted, longed greatly for a return to the land of promise, where, as they knew, Christ should be born of the seed of David.

But the Babylonian kingdom was not one of many kingdoms: it was a great world-power. And while the Jews were in captivity, a great change came about, for the *Persians* acquired the control of the entire dominion.

And it was one of these Persian kings, by the name of *Coresh*, or *Cyrus*, who, in the year 535 B. C., gave permission to the Jews to return to their country. Throughout his entire realm he made this proclamation: "The Lord God of heaven hath charged me to build Him an house in Jerusalem. Who is there among you of all His people? Let him go up to build the house of the Lord God of Israel. He is the God."

Then rose up all whose spirit God had raised to go. And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things. And Cyrus gave them the vessels of the house of the Lord which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, in all 5400 gold and silver vessels. The whole congregation together which went forth from the captivity numbered about 50,000. Laden with numerous goods, with very many horses, and mules, and camels, and asses, they went out. The leaders of the expedition were **ZERUBBABEL** and **JESHUA**.

When they had arrived in the land of their fathers, all the people settled in their former places and cities. When the seventh month was come, the people gathered themselves together in Jerusalem. And they resolved to erect the house of God again upon the old site. First of all they set up the altar and offered burnt offerings unto the Lord. In the second year of their coming the

builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord. And they set the priests and the Levites with trumpets and with cymbals to praise the Lord after the ordinance and with the psalms of David. And they sang together by courses (responsively) in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord, because He is good, for His mercy endureth forever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout. But many who were old men, who had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; so that the people could not discern the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping.

But the adversaries of the Jews, who had migrated from their heathen countries into the deserted provinces of the ten tribes of Israel, and who were called *Samaritans*, wanted to help build the house of the Lord, and said: "We seek your God, as ye do." But Zerubbabel and Jeshua said: "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto the Lord: but we ourselves together will build, as the King Cyrus commanded us." Then the people of the land troubled and molested the people of Judah in building. They wrote an accusation against the Jews, and libeled them before the king of Persia as people who wanted to revolt. A command then came from the king to forcibly resist the building, and the work of the house of God ceased for several years.

Then, upon the earnest admonition of the Prophets *Haggai* and *Zechariah*, Zerubbabel and Jeshua began again to build the house of God; and the Prophets of God were helping them. And the eye of their God was upon them, that the people could not cause them to cease from building. There even came an emphatic decree from King *Darius* to let the Jews build this house, and moreover to give them their expenses from the king's tribute, that they might again set up their sacred worship with all its appointments. So things prospered, and the house was finished.

In the sixth year of the reign of Darius the returned children of the captivity kept the *dedication of the house of God* with joy. And they set the priests and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, as it is written in the book of Moses. And at the proper time for seven days they kept the passover, the feast of unleavened bread, unto the Lord, the God of Israel. This was in the year 514 B. C.

Now after these things *Artaxerxes* became king of Persia. Among the captive Jews that had remained in Persia there was one

of the most prominent priests and scribes, named EZRA. To him Artaxerxes gave the following letter: "I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee; and to carry the silver and the gold, which the king and his counselors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, that thou mayest buy what is needed for the offerings in the house of your God. And I make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river (Euphrates), that whatsoever Ezra shall require of you, it shall be done speedily. Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done speedily: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king? And thou, Ezra, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river. And teach ye them that know not the laws of thy God. And whosoever shall not do the law of thy God, let judgment be executed speedily upon him."

Then said Ezra: "Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart." And then he relates: "I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord, my God, was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me. And we afflicted ourselves before our God, to seek of Him a right way for us. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen, to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek Him. So we besought our God for this: and He was entreated of us."

Five months later this second expedition of Jews came to Jerusalem. And they offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel, and delivered the king's commissions unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors on this side of the river. This was in the year 456 B. C. —

Among those who had remained in captivity in Persia there was also NEHEMIAH, who was cup-bearer to the king. To him there came several men from Judah, and told him that things were still in a sad condition in the Holy Land, and that the wall of Jerusalem was still broken down. Then Nehemiah mourned greatly, and made request of the king to send him unto Judah, that he might build the city of his fathers. And the king granted the request.

When Nehemiah came to Jerusalem, and saw the desolation of the city, he said unto the rulers and unto the rest of the people: "Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem." So they built

the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof, for the people had a mind to work.

But the mighty men from Samaria would not brook this, and fell upon them while they worked. But the children of Judah made their prayer unto their God, and Nehemiah set the people to guard against them, with spears, and shields, and bows. Henceforth with one of their hands they wrought in the work, and with the other hand they held a weapon. Then the enemies lost courage; for they perceived that this work was wrought of God. So the walls were built, and the doors were set up. Nehemiah, however, was made Tirshatha, or governor, of Judah by the king. This was in the year 440 B. C.

And all the people gathered themselves together, and Ezra brought the book of the Law of Moses. And Ezra stood upon a pulpit of wood. And when he opened the book, all the people stood up. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God: and all the people answered, Amen, Amen. And the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law. But Ezra and Nehemiah said: "This day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength." And they gathered branches from the trees, and made themselves booths (tabernacles), and sat under them, and kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day also. And they read in the book of the Law every day.

And all the people confessed their sins, saying: "Lord, we are servants this day in the land which Thou gavest unto our fathers. Thou hast set kings over us, and they have dominion over us at their pleasure, and we are in great distress. And we make a sore complaint, and write it; and our princes and priests seal unto it." And they entered into an oath to do all the commandments of the Lord, and His judgments, and His statutes.

Nehemiah restored all the temple service according to the Law of the Lord. And he cleansed the people of all strangers, that Israel might be a people of the Lord.

Ezra gathered all the Biblical books.—

What is told in this chapter you will find in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Later Destinies of the Jewish Nation.

The same countries over which the Assyrians and *Babylonians* had ruled later on came under the dominion of the *Medes and Persians*. But their dominion, too, was at an end, for *Alexander the Great* of Macedonia conquered the Persian empire, and founded the *third great world power*, called the *Macedonian*. The Holy Land was also included in this. At the death of Alexander his generals divided the realm among themselves. They established themselves as kings, and carried on great wars with one another. A descendant of one of these was *Antiochus Epiphanes*, king of Syria. He wanted to add the kingdom of Egypt to his dominion. After he had conquered in Egypt, he returned by way of Jerusalem, went into the sanctuary, plundered it, and had many people killed. Then he devastated the temple and the city. The citizens fled, and there was universal distress. Antiochus also proclaimed a decree, that all the people of his realm should hold the same, to-wit, heathenish, religious, observances. He caused an idol to be placed upon the altar of God, and had altars erected in all the cities of Judah, where the people were required to sacrifice to idols. Whoever remained faithful to the Law of God was killed. At that time many people fell from the Law of God, but many, too, remained faithful, and preferred death to apostasy. (169 B. C.)

But there was a priest by the name of *Mattathias*, who had five sons. He cried: "Let every one that is zealous for the Law follow me!" He and his sons left all they had, and many pious people fled with them into the mountains. Then Mattathias went throughout the country, threw down the altars, circumcised the children, slew the apostates, and maintained the Law of God over against the power of the heathen.

After the death of Mattathias his son *Judas* went throughout the cities of Judah, cheerful and bold as a lion, and all that were oppressed gathered themselves to him. Antiochus sent out a very great army against him, but Judas attacked it, and defeated it. In the next year he met with like success. From thus striking the enemy, he was called *Maccabeus*, which means, a hammer. After him his family is called "the Maccabees."

After this victory Judas and all the people went to Jerusalem, and dedicated the temple anew.

After the death of Judas the heathen and the apostates again became powerful in the land, and there was much grief and affliction in Israel. Then Judas's brother *Jonathan* fought the heathen with great success, and restored the honor of the nation.

After Jonathan's death the people made his brother *Simon* captain. And he became both high priest and prince of the Jews. He also made a treaty with the *Romans*. As long as Simon lived the country was quiet. He ruled well, and benefited the country greatly, so that there was once more prosperity and contentment in Israel.

Under the rule of the descendants of Simon the Jewish people enjoyed outward liberty and happiness for forty years. But when a quarrel about the supremacy ensued, one of the contestants called upon the *ROMANS* for aid. The Roman general Pompey came with an army (63 B. C.), conquered the country, held it for the Romans, and enthroned *HEROD*, an Edomite, as king under the supremacy of the Romans. So the Jews were *under the supremacy of the Roman emperor*, the fourth world power.

Let me also tell you of the internal affairs of the Jewish nation at this time, as concerning faith and worship.

At the time of Ezra and Nehemiah the Lord had still sent Prophets to the people, who spoke to them in the name of the Lord. The last of these had been *Malachi*. Since that time, however, say from the year 400 B. C., the voice of the Prophets was hushed in Israel. Now everyone had to apply himself to that Word which was written. In place of the Prophets there were *Scribes*, of whom, as you know, Ezra was one. These were in great esteem with the people, and were called *Rabbi* (Master). And in the towns and villages *synagogues* or schools were erected, in which the Scribes taught the Word of God.

But in the course of time the Scribes more and more lost the true understanding of the Scriptures, and they taught all sorts of traditions of men. The *Pharisees*, too, were quite numerous among the people at that time. They made it their boast that they not only kept the Law of God, but also numerous other ordinances, over and above the Law of God. Therefore they ascribed to themselves an exceptional piety and holiness, and the people respected them as though they were men of higher perfection. But their piety consisted only in outward works of men, having a good appearance before the people. For they had lost the living God from out of

their hearts and their lives; and the hope of the promised Christ they had all but forsaken. So the very persons who enjoyed the greatest respect of the people proved the destruction of the people, for by their sanctimoniousness or affected holiness they ruined the piety of the people. — The *Sadducees* also were numerous. They denied the existence of God, of angels, of spirits, of the soul in man, of the resurrection, of a life after death. Their axiom was that when a man is dead, that this is the end of him. And as they taught, so they lived. Their aim was material prosperity and a gratification of their lusts and appetites.

So there was a sad state of affairs among the people to whom God the Lord had so amply revealed Himself, and out of whose midst the Savior of the world was to come. There were but few who waited for the Savior; there was but a little band that still sought to obtain heaven and eternal life. The entire nation was fairly steeped in worldly-mindedness and carnal lusts.

King *Herod*, whom the Romans had enthroned, was worse than the heathen. He murdered any person who crossed his path, even his wife and children. During his reign Christ was born. After his death his sons divided the whole Jewish country among themselves. Cruel *Archelaus* obtained Judaea and Samaria. He assumed the title of king. *Herod Antipas* received Galilee and the southern part of Peraea. *Philip* got the northern part of Peraea. Both of these had the title of tetrarch. *Archelaus* was soon deposed by the Roman emperor, and his country was administered by vice-regents, also called governors.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Prophets in Israel and Their Prophecies.

God the Lord gave His Word to the children of Israel through PROPHETS.

The Prophets were the men who were filled with the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary measure, and were moved by Him to preach and, in part, also to write the things with which He inspired them. The Prophets admonished, reproved, taught, and consoled the people; they threatened and foretold the judgments of God; *above all things they prophesied concerning Christ*, the

Redeemer and Savior, who should come to reconcile God on account of the sins of man, and bring about a new condition for the people of God, gathered from all nations.

There even were schools for prophets among the people of God in which men were instructed in the Word of God, and also prepared for the prophecy.

At all times the Lord God sent Prophets to His people. It was only in the last 400 years before the birth of Christ that God no longer did this. At that time God directed His people to His written Word.

One of the Prophets of God, and a Prophet without equal, was MOSES. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit he wrote his five books. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit he gave an account of the ways of God with man before his lifetime, and of the prophecies of God concerning the Savior. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit he related God's guidance of Israel, whose mediator Moses himself had been. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit he himself prophesied. He also prophesied concerning the Savior: "The Lord, thy God, will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken," Deut. 18, 15.

King DAVID, too, was a Prophet of God. He received prophecies, and he himself prophesied of the Savior, that He should be David's son, that He should suffer, die, rise, ascend into heaven, seat Himself at the right hand of God, and obtain the promised great victory,— He who is the Lord.

A powerful Prophet was ELIJAH, who preached to the degenerate Kingdom of Israel, and did many signs and wonders by the power of God, until finally he was taken into heaven. And the spirit of Elijah fell upon his servant and disciple ELISHA.— The First and Second Book of Kings tells you about these two Prophets. (1 Kings 17 — 2 Kings 11.)

There were many Prophets in Israel.

But let me speak of just a few of the Prophets whose writings and prophecies we have in the Bible.

Foremost among them is ISAIAH, who lived in the Kingdom of Judah before its fall.

You have already heard some of the prophecies of Isaiah saying that the Redeemer should be both God and man: David's son and the Virgin's son.

Let me show you but two more prophecies of Isaiah, although his prophecies regarding Christ are very many.

The first prophecy I have reference to is this: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God," Is. 40, 3. Here Isaiah prophesies, — please remember this, — that before the promised Woman's Seed, the Redeemer who is God the Lord, would come, there would be a Prophet, a preacher, in the wilderness, going before Him and preparing the way for Him.

The second prophecy which I would mention is this: — "He (the Redeemer) shall grow up before Him (God) as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." (While Isaiah prophesies, he relates the things which he saw in the spirit: hence he speaks as though these things had already occurred.) "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him. He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. *Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:* yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. *But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.* All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; *and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.* He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was He stricken. And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: *by His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.* Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with

the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors," Is. 53, 2—12.

Shall you, my reader, be among the spoils that the Savior carries out of the fray, when once you have learned to know Him?

The Prophet MICAH, who was contemporary with Isaiah, prophesied concerning the birth of the great Son of David, saying: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," Micah 5, 2.

At the time of the Babylonian captivity the three great Prophets, JEREMIAH, EZEKIEL, and DANIEL, preached. The first of these prophesied among the few Jews that had remained in their country. The other Prophets preached among the captives. *Ezekiel* preached thus regarding the Son of David: "I will set up one Shepherd over them, and He shall feed them, even my servant David; He shall feed them, and He shall be their Shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it," Ezek. 34, 23. 24. *Daniel* in a most distinct and remarkable way prophesied how the great world powers should follow upon one another and perish, and how the eternal kingdom should be established through the "*Messiah, the Prince.*" And indeed, the fulfillment of his prophecies lies plainly before us in the history of the world.

After the Babylonian captivity there arose among the Jewish people the Prophets HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, and MALACHI.

At Haggai's time the temple at Jerusalem was rebuilt. And he prophesied about the Messiah, that is, Christ, as follows: "For thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, *and the desire of all nations shall come.* And I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts. And in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts," Hagg. 2, 6. 7. 9.

Zechariah prophesied: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto

thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass," Zech. 9, 9.

Malachi, the last of the Prophets, said, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in: *behold, He shall come*, saith the Lord of hosts," Mal. 3, 1.

Here again, just as in Isaiah, it is prophesied that a prophet, a preacher, a messenger should go before and prepare the way immediately before the arrival of the promised Redeemer, the Woman's Seed, the Messenger, and Preacher, and Executor of the covenant of grace, of Him who is the Lord. The same thing is prophesied by Malachi in the following words: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet" (a prophet like unto Elijah) "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers," Mal. 4, 5, 6.

And this prophecy of Malachi concluded the prophecies regarding Christ the Redeemer.

PART TWO.



CHAPTER I.

How God Sent His Son, Born of a Woman.

The Holy Spirit says in the Scriptures: "*When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,*" Gal. 4, 4. 5.

This is what I now want to show you from the Bible. —

"There was in the days of King Herod a certain priest named *Zacharias*, and his wife was *Elizabeth*. They were both righteous before God. And they had no child, and they both were now well stricken in years.

"And it came to pass that his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord." (That is, while the people prayed, he was to light the incense upon the altar of incense in the temple.) "And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name *JOHN*. He shall be great in the sight of the Lord; and he shall go before *HIM* in the spirit and power of Elias, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

"And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

"The angel answered, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God, and am sent to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words.

"And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them; and he beckoned unto them and remained speechless."

The child whose birth was heralded here was not to be the Savior, you understand, but that forerunner of the Savior foretold by the Prophets. —

“In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named *Nazareth*, to a virgin espoused” (engaged to be married) “to a man whose name was *Joseph*, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was *Mary*. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women !

“And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

“And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.” (Mary, too, was descended from King David.)

“Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man ?

“The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.

“And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.

“And the angel departed from her.

“And Mary arose in those days, and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost; and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence cometh it to me, that *the mother of my Lord* should come to me? Blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

“And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Savior. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name. . . . He hath

holpen His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy; as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever.

“And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.”—

“Now the angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name *Jesus*; for *He shall save His people from their sins.*” (“Jesus” means “Savior.”) “Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

“Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife.”—

“Now Elizabeth brought forth a son. And her neighbors and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

“And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so, but he shall be called *John*. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is *John*.

“And they marveled all.

“And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God. And all they that heard this, laid it up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

“And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people. . . . And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his showing unto Israel.” —

“And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called *Bethlehem*, because he was out of the house and lineage of David, to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child.

“And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.* And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*

“And as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in the manger.

“And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.” —

“And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child, His name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before He was conceived in the womb.”—

“And when the days of her purification according to the Law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord.

“And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, *waiting for the consolation of Israel*. And it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple.

“And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, he took Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.”—

“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him.

“When Herod, the king, had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea; for thus it is written by the Prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

“Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young Child; and when ye have found Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him also.

“When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the East, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary, His mother, and fell down, and worshiped Him; and when they had opened

their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

“And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their country another way.

“When the wise men were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him. When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night, and departed into Egypt.

“Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, from two years old and under.

“But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the Child’s life. And he arose, and took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel, and dwelt in a city called *Nazareth*. —

“The parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and His mother knew not of it. But they, supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day’s journey; and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him.

“And after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. And when they saw Him, they were amazed. And His mother said unto Him, Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing. And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? *Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?* And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them.

“And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them; but His mother kept all those sayings in her heart.

“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

Let the earth now praise the Lord
Who hath truly kept His word,
And the sinners’ Help and Friend
Now at last to us doth send.

What the fathers most desired,
What the prophets’ heart inspired,
What they longed for many a year,
Stands fulfilled in glory here.

Abram’s promised great Reward,
Zion’s Helper, Jacob’s Lord,
He of twofold race, behold,
Truly came, as long foretold.

Welcome, O my Savior, now!
Hail! my Portion, Lord, art Thou!
Here, too, in my heart, I pray,
O prepare Thyself a way.

CHAPTER II.

How John Administered His Office, and How Jesus Entered Upon His Office.

“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of *Tiberius Caesar*, *Pontius Pilate* being governor of *Judaea*, and *Herod* (*Antipas*) being tetrarch of *Galilee*, and his brother *Philip* tetrarch of *Ituraea* and of the region of *Trachonitis*, and *Lysanias* the tetrarch of *Abilene*, *Annas* and *Caiaphas* being the high priests, the word of God came unto *John*, the son of *Zacharias*, in the wilderness.” (*John* was thirty years old.) “As it is written in the Prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee.

“And *John the Baptist* came into all the country about *Jordan*, and preached in the wilderness of *Judaea* the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and said, *Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!* For this is he that it is written of in the book of the words of *Esaias* the Prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

“And the same John had his raiment of camel’s hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

“Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

“But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

“And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not, John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

“And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.” —

“Then cometh Jesus unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?

“Jesus answered, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.

“Then he suffered Him.

“And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and prayed; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and John saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” —

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He afterward hungered. And when the tempter came to Him, he said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. — But He answered, It is written,

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

“Then the Devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.—Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God.

“Again the Devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and saith unto Him, All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.—Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.

“Then the Devil leaveth Him, and, behold, the angels came and ministered unto Him.”

Here the Woman’s Seed, Jesus Christ, withstood the temptations of Satan for us, and thus made good the loss occasioned by Adam’s fall and our fall.—

“And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

“And he confessed, I am not the Christ.

“And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias?

“He saith, I am not.

“Art thou that Prophet?

“And he answered, No.

“Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

“He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Esaias.

“And they which were sent said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet?

“John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you whom ye know not, He it is who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF

THE WORLD. This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for He was before me. And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that **THIS IS THE SON OF GOD.**

“Again, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

“Then Jesus turned, and saith unto them, What seek ye?

“They said unto Him, Rabbi, where dwellest Thou?

“He saith unto them, Come and see.

“They came and saw, and abode with Him that day. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed Jesus, was *Andrew, Simon Peter's brother*. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, *We have found the Messias!* And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called *Cephas* (stone, rock).

“The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth *Philip*, and saith unto him, Follow me! Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

“Philip findeth *Nathanael*, and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

“And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?

“Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

“Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile.

“Nathanael saith unto Him, Whence knowest Thou me?

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

“Nathanael answered and saith unto Him, *Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel.*

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these.”

Thus Jesus gathered His first disciples.

O my child, learn to know Jesus and become His disciple!

O Jesus, Lamb of God, who art
The Life and Comfort of my heart,
I, wretched sinner, come to Thee
And bring so many sins with me.

O God, my sinfulness is great,
I groan beneath a dreadful weight;
Yet be Thou merciful, I pray,
Take guilt and punishment away.

Saint John the Baptist biddeth me
To cast my burden, Lord, on Thee,
Since Thou hast left Thy heavenly throne,
That for our sins Thou mightst atone.

Help me amend my ways, O Lord,
And willingly obey Thy Word;
Do always, then, abide with me,
And when I die, take me to Thee.

CHAPTER III.

How Jesus Worked Miracles.

Jesus worked miracles, or wonders.

He is Himself a wonder. “His name shall be called Wonderful,” says the Prophet concerning Him. For He is the Man who is the Lord God. “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given . . . and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, *The mighty God, The everlasting Father,*” says the Prophet. And the angel at Bethlehem said: “Unto you is born this day a Savior, which is Christ *the Lord.*”

In order to manifest Himself as such Jesus performed miracles.

A miracle is an act, an event, which is contrary to the laws and the course of nature.

God has made the laws of nature and maintains them. God only, therefore, can break them. God only can work miracles,

wonders. Who does not believe that God can perform miracles has come to the point where he believes nothing at all, though nature with a thousand voices tells him of it, tells him that there is a living God, almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

By working miracles Jesus manifested Himself as being God, God who became man and our Savior.

The fact that Jesus did miracles is testified by Scriptures.

And you shall know that the Bible tells the truth *if* you read it as one who seeks after God.

Jesus worked miracles.

And some of His miracles I will relate to you in this chapter.—

1. “And there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there; and both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.

“And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And He saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

“This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed on Him.”—

2. “So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee. And there was a certain nobleman” (courtier, ruler), “whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

“Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

“The nobleman saith unto Him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

“Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth.

“And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

“This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when He was come out of Judaea into Galilee.” —

3. “And it came to pass that, as the people pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God, He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two ships standing by the lake; but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And He entered into one of the ships, which was Simon’s (Peter’s), and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And He sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

“And when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

“And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at Thy word I will let down the net.

“And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners in the other ship that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

“When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished at the draught of the fishes; and so was also *James* and *John*, which were partners with Simon.

“And Jesus said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

“And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed Him.” —

4. “And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a centurion” (a captain over hundred men), “beseech-

ing Him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

“And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

“The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

“When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.” (The centurion was a Roman heathen.)

“And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.

“And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.” —

5. “And when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the sea was covered with the waves; but He was asleep.

“And His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us; we perish!

“And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

“But the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!” —

6. “And He passed over, and came into His own city (Caper-naum). And, behold, they brought unto Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed. And Jesus seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

“And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.

“And Jesus knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, then saith He to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house.

“But when the multitudes saw it, they marveled, and glorified God which had given such power unto men.”—

7. “And there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and worshiped Him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live. And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did His disciples.

“And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind Him, and touched the hem of His garment: for she said within herself, If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole.

“But Jesus turned Him about, and when He saw her, He said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

“And when Jesus came into the ruler’s house, and saw the minstrels, and the people making a noise, He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed Him to scorn.

“But when the people were put forth, He went in, and took her by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi (Damsel, arise)! And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years.

“And they were astonished with a great astonishment.”—

8. “And it came to pass afterward that Jesus went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and much people. Now when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and much people of the city was with her.

“And when Jesus saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not! And He came and touched the bier; and they that bare him stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise! And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother.

“And there came a fear on all; and they glorified God, saying, That a great Prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited His people. And this rumor of Him went out throughout all Judaea, throughout all the region round about.”—

9. “After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee (Sea of Tiberias). And a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His miracles which He did on them that were diseased.

And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.

“When Jesus then lifted up His eyes, and saw a great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? And this He said to prove him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

“Philip answered Him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them that every one of them may take a little.

“Andrew saith unto Him, There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?

“And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were sat down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

“When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

“Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.” —

10. “When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, and make Him king, He constrained His disciples to get into a ship, and to go before Him unto the other side. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into the mountain apart to pray.

“And His disciples went down unto the sea, and entered into a ship. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves.

“And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And He would have passed by them. And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

“And Peter answered Him, and said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water.

“And He said, Come!

“And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, Lord, save me!

“And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

“And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. And immediately the ship was at the land whither they went. Then they that were in the ship came and worshiped Him, saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God.” —

11. “Then Jesus departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan” (a heathen woman, therefore) “came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

“But He answered her not a word.

“And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

“But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (that is, as concerns His signs and miracles).

“Then came she and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, help me!

“But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s” (the children of Israel’s) “bread, and to cast it to the dogs” (the heathen).

“And she said, Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.

“Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.

“And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” —

12. “Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. Their brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore his sisters sent unto Him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard that, He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When He had heard there-

fore that he was sick, He abode two days still in the same place where He was. Then after that saith He to His disciples, Let us go into Judaea again. Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.

“Then said His disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that He had spoken of taking rest in sleep.

“Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him.

“Then when Jesus came, He found that he had lain in the grave four days already. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him: but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee.

“Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

“Martha saith unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

“Jesus said unto her, *I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.* Believest thou this?

“She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord: I believe that *Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.*

“And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary, her sister, secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto Him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met Him. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

“When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him?

“They said unto Him, Lord, come and see.

“Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man which opened the eyes of the blind have caused that even this man should not have died?

“Jesus therefore again groaning in Himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone.

“Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

“Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid.

“And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me. And I knew that Thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent me. And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth!

“And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin.

“Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.” —

The Holy Scriptures record still more miracles of the Lord Jesus. But you may read them there. This book cannot contain them all. These I write that you may behold His glory and believe in Him.

Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
Great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed
His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free,
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.

He comes with succor speedy
To those who suffer wrong;
To help the poor and needy,
And bid the weak be strong;
To give them songs for sighing;
Their darkness turn to light,
Whose souls, condemned and dying,
Were precious in His sight.

CHAPTER IV.

How Jesus Receiveth Sinners.

1. "And one of the Pharisees desired Him that He would eat with him. And He went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

"And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with ointment.

"Now when the Pharisee which had bidden Him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him: for she is a sinner.

"And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee.

"And he saith, Master, say on!

"There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when he had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

"Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most.

"And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

"And He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

"And they that sat at meat with Him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

"And He said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." —

2. "Then drew near unto Him all the publicans" (tax collectors, who commonly were very dishonest) "and sinners for to hear Him.

"And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

"And He spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.— Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. *Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.*

"And He said, A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.— And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.— And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.— And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, *Father,*

I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: *for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.* And they began to be merry. — Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.” —

3. “And Jesus spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: —

“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, *God, be merciful to me a sinner!*”

“I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” —

4. “And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who He was; and could not for the press, because he was

little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him: for He was to pass that way.

“And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That He was gone to be a guest of a man that is a sinner.

“And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

“And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. *For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*”

“Jesus sinners doth receive!”

O may all this saying ponder
Who in sin's delusions live,
And from God and heaven wander!
This alone sure hope can give—
“Jesus sinners doth receive!”

We deserve but grief and shame,
Yet His words, rich grace revealing,
Pardon, peace, and life proclaim;
Here their ills have perfect healing
Who with humble hearts believe:
“Jesus sinners doth receive!”

Sheep that from the fold did stray
Every faithful shepherd seeketh;
Weary souls that lost their way,
Christ the Shepherd seeks and taketh
In His arms, that they may live—
“Jesus sinners doth receive!”

Come, ye sinners, one and all,
Come, ye all have invitation;
Come, obey His gracious call,
Come and take His free salvation!
Firmly in these words believe:
“Jesus sinners doth receive!”

CHAPTER V.

How God Wills that We Should Hear the Word of Jesus in the Holy Scriptures.

“And it came to pass, Jesus took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray, and *was transfigured before them*. And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and did shine as the sun, and His raiment became shining as a light, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them. And, behold, there talked with Jesus two men, which were *Moses* and *Elias*: who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with Him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw His glory, and the two men that stood with Him. And it came to pass, as they departed from Him, Peter said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles: one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said; for they were sore afraid.

“While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.* And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came, and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only with themselves.

“And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.”

Here Jesus, who usually walked about in lowliness as another man, appeared in that divine glory which He possessed at all times.

Here we catch a glimpse of eternal life. For Moses and Elias, the Prophets who had lived on earth so many hundred years before, appeared bodily.

And this story teaches that we should hear the Word of Jesus which we have in Holy Writ. For God the Father said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; *hear ye Him.*" And Peter writes: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with Him in the holy mount," 2 Pet. 1, 16—18.

Do you, therefore, be like unto Mary of whom the Bible relates as follows:—

"Now it came to pass, as they went, that He entered into a certain village (Bethany): and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a sister called *Mary*, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to Him, and said, Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me.

"And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

So do you hear the Word of Jesus in the Holy Scriptures. That is the one thing needful. Do not let a worldly mind or devious words lead you away from that.

For just listen to the following serious story from the mouth of Jesus:—

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.

"And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom" (close communion).

"The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." (Yes, in hell there is a dreadful awakening!) "And he

cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

“But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.” (Yes, in hell one becomes aware of the opportunities one has forfeited.)

“Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

“Abraham saith unto him, *They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them!*” (Do you see now what you should do? You should hear the Word of Jesus as it is written in the Bible.)

“And he said, Nay, Father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

“And he said unto him, *If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*”

You will find the Word of Jesus in the Bible, both in the *Old* and in the *New Testament*. The Old Testament is the revelation of God through the word and the writings of the Prophets *before* the birth of Christ. The New Testament is the revelation of God through the word and the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles *after* the birth of Christ.

See how the Lord Jesus chose His New Testament witnesses and preachers:—

“And it came to pass in those days that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called unto Him His disciples: and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named apostles” (messengers, ambassadors). “And He ordained the twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach. And He said, It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

“Now the names of the twelve Apostles are these: The first, *Simon*, who is called *Peter*, and *Andrew*, his brother; *James*, the

son of Zebedee, and *John*, his brother; *Philip*, and *Bartholomew* (or *Nathanael*); *Thomas*, and *Matthew*, the publican; *James*, the son of *Alphaeus*, and *Lebbaeus*, whose surname was *Thaddeus*; *Simon* the Canaanite, and *Judas Iscariot*, who also betrayed Him."

And now hear the story of John the Baptist, the great Prophet and forerunner of Christ.

"Herod had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

"Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

"And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee; and when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

"And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask?

"And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

"And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

"And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.

"And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb, and went and told Jesus."

And hear also how Jesus caresses *little children* and blesses them, and how, therefore, it certainly is His will that they be instructed in His Word as soon as possible.

"And they brought infants (see Luke 18, 15) to Jesus, that He should touch them: and His disciples rebuked those that

brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them, *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.* And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them.” —

One thing's needful! then, Lord Jesus,
Keep this one thing in my mind.
All beside, though first it please us,
Soon a grievous yoke we find;
Beneath it the heart is still fretting and striving,
No true, lasting happiness ever deriving.
The gain of this one thing all loss can requite,
And teach me in all things to find true delight.

How were Mary's thoughts devoted
Her eternal joy to find,
As intent each word she noted,
At her Savior's feet reclined!
How kindled her heart, how devout was its feeling,
While hearing the lessons that Christ was revealing!
For Jesus all earthly concerns she forgot,
And all was repaid in that one happy lot.

Thus my longings, heavenward tending,
Jesus, rest alone on Thee;
Help me, thus on Thee depending,
Savior, come and dwell in me!
Although all the world should forsake and forget Thee,
In love will I follow Thee never to quit Thee;
Lord Jesus, both spirit and life is Thy Word;
And is there a joy which Thou dost not afford?

CHAPTER VI.

How Jesus Suffered and Died for Us.

“And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they followed. And Jesus took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and began to tell them what things should happen unto Him, saying, *Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished.* For He shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles; and

He shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death: and the third day He shall rise again.— And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.”

You will marvel, dear reader, that Jesus says that the Scribes and Pharisees, the spiritual rulers of His own people, and of His church, will condemn Him. But if you read the story of the life of Jesus in the Bible, you will see that they always hated and persecuted Him. And why? Because they were earthly, worldly, carnal-minded, while Jesus was heavenly, divine, spiritual, and preached repentance and faith in Him, and eternal life. “The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not,” John 1, 5. 11.—

“Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom He raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

“But when His disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? And they murmured against her. Then said Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, which should betray Him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

“Then said Jesus, Let her alone; why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: *she is come beforehand to anoint my body to the burying.* Verily, I say unto you, Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.”—

“And it came to pass on the next day when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into

the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

“All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion,¹⁾ Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass.

“And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set Him thereon.

“And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!”—

“And Jesus said unto His disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified.

“Then assembled together the chief priests and the Scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called *Caiaphas*, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill Him. — Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed *Iscariot*, being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him unto them, and said, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.”—

“And Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover” (the lamb of the passover), “that we may eat. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them. Now when the even was come” (Thursday evening at six o’clock, which was the beginning of Friday according to Jewish custom), “He sat down with His disciples. And He said unto them, With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.

1) “Sion” or “Zion” was the name of that mountain in the city of Jerusalem on which the palace of David had stood. “Daughter of Sion” was the name of the city of Jerusalem. And, besides, the congregation of the faithful of the Old Testament was called by that name.

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples, saying, *Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.*

“After the same manner also He took the cup when He had supped; and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, *Drink ye all of it; this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins; this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*

“And when they had sung an hymn, Jesus went, as He was wont, over the Brook Cedron to the Mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him. Then said He unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

“But Peter answered and said unto Him, Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended.

“Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, That this day, even this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

“But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee in any wise. — Likewise also said all the disciples.

“Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called *Gethsemane*, where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples.

“And Judas also, which betrayed Him, knew the place.

“Then saith Jesus unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

“And He taketh with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be sorrowful and sore amazed, and to be very heavy; and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death; tarry ye here and watch with me.

“And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt.

“And He cometh to His disciples, and findeth them sleeping, and saith, Simon, sleepest thou? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

“He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.

“And He came and found them asleep again (for their eyes were heavy), neither wist they what to answer Him.

“And He left them, and went away again, and prayed again, saying the same words.

“And there appeared unto Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him.

“And being in agony He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

“And when He rose up from prayer, and was come to His disciples, He found them sleeping for sorrow, and said unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest. Why sleep ye? It is enough: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me. Pray, lest ye enter into temptation.”

Here in Gethsemane God verily and actually laid all the curse which we had deserved by our sins upon Christ, the Lamb of God.

“And while He spake, lo, Judas came, and with him a great multitude, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, with lanterns and with torches, with swords and staves. And he that betrayed Him had given them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is He; take Him, and lead Him away safely.

“Jesus went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

“They answered, Jesus of Nazareth.

“Jesus saith unto them, I am He. And they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked He them again, Whom seek ye?

“And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

“Jesus answered, I have told you that I am He; if, therefore, ye seek me, let these go their way.

“And forthwith Judas came to Him, and said, Hail, Master! — and kissed Him.

“And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?

“Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took Him.

“Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. Then Jesus said unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath; for all they that

take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? And He touched his ear, and healed him.

“Then all the disciples forsook Him, and fled.”

“Then the band and the officers of the Jews bound Jesus and led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the Scribes and the elders all were assembled.

“The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world. Ask them which heard me. And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest Thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?

“Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put Him to death, but found none; yea, though many false witnesses came, yet their witness agreed not together.

“And the high priest asked Him, and said unto Him, *I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God.*

“Jesus saith, Thou hast said; *I am.*

“Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses?

“And they all condemned Him, and said, He is guilty of death.

“And the men that held Jesus mocked Him, and spat in His face, and buffeted Him. And when they had blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face, and said, Prophesy unto us, Thou Christ, Who is it that smote Thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against Him.”—

Now let me tell you what happened to *Simon Peter* during the time that Jesus stood before the chief council.

“Peter followed Jesus afar off into the high priest’s palace. And the servants and officers had made a fire of coals; and they warmed themselves; and Peter stood with them to see the end. Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man’s disciples?

“But he denied before them all, saying, Woman, I am not.

“And after a little while, he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

“And another maid saw him, and said unto them that stood by, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And another saith, Thou art also of them.

“And again he denied with an oath, and said, Man, I am not; I do not know the man.

“And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Surely, thou art one of them; for thou art a Galilaeian, and thy speech agreeth thereto. One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?

“Then he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man of whom ye speak.

“And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew the second time. And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.”—

And now hear about *Judas*.

“Then Judas, which had betrayed Jesus, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood.

“And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that!

“And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and went and hanged himself.”—

“And the whole multitude of them arose, and bound Jesus, and led Him from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment, and delivered Him unto Pontius Pilate, the governor: and it was early.

“Pilate went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

“And the chief priests and elders began to accuse Him of many things, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ a King.

“Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and asked Him, saying, Art Thou the King of the Jews?

“Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If my

kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

“Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a King, then?

“Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice.

“Pilate saith unto Him, What is truth?

“And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in Him no fault at all.

“And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

“When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged unto Herod’s jurisdiction he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. And when Herod saw Jesus he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see Him of a long season, because he had heard many things of Him, and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned with Him in many words: but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and Scribes stood, and vehemently accused Him. And Herod with his men of war set Him at naught, and mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him again to Pilate.

“And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people, said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined Him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse Him; no, nor yet Herod. I will therefore chastise Him and release Him.

“Now at the feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner whom they would. And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas, that for sedition and murder was cast into prison; and the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus, the King of the Jews, which is called Christ? For he knew that of envy the chief priests had delivered Him.

“But the chief priests and elders persuaded and moved the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

“The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?

“And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas!

“Pilate spake again to them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?

“They cried, Crucify Him, crucify Him!

“And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath He done? I have found no cause of death in Him: I will therefore chastise Him, and let Him go.

“And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify Him! And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

“Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, and began to salute Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote Him with their hands, and spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head, and bowing their knees worshiped Him.

“Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring Him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in Him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When the chief priests therefore and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify Him, crucify Him! Pilate saith unto them, Take ye Him, and crucify Him: for I find no fault in Him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.

“When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest Thou not unto me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore

he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

“When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat: and he said unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him! Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

“When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, willing to content the multitude he gave sentence that it should be as they required, and took water, and washed his hands, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it! Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children!

“Then released he unto them Barabbas that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired: and when they had mocked and scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to their will, to be crucified.” —

“Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus, and took the robe off Him, and put His own raiment on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him. And He bearing His cross went forth.

“And there were also two others, malefactors, led with Him to be put to death. And they bring Him unto the place which is called in the Hebrew *Golgotha*, that is to say, a place of a skull. There they crucified Him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, and Jesus in the midst. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, And He was numbered with the transgressors. And it was the third hour” (nine o'clock in the morning).

“Then said Jesus, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*

“And Pilate wrote a title of His accusation, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

“Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also His coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not

rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. (Ps. 22, 18.)

“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary, the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, *Woman, behold thy son!* Then saith He to the disciple, *Behold thy mother!* And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

“And they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, save Thyself! If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross! Likewise the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the Scribes and elders and the people, He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be Christ, the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him; for He said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also which were crucified with Him cast the same in His teeth. And the soldiers also mocked Him, saying, If Thou be the king of the Jews, save Thyself!

“And one of the malefactors railed on Him, saying, If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us. But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, *Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

“And it was about the sixth hour (12 o’clock, at noon), and there was a darkness all over the earth until the ninth hour (3 o’clock). And the sun was darkened. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, *My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?* And some of them said, Behold, He calleth Elias.

“After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, *I thirst.* Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink. And He, together with the rest, said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save Him.

“When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, *It is finished*; and He cried again with a loud voice, saying, *Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit*: and having said thus, He bowed His head and gave up the ghost.

“And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

“And when the centurion, which stood over against Him, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw that He so cried out, and gave up the ghost, and the earthquake and those things that were done, they feared greatly, and glorified God, and said, Certainly this was a righteous man. Truly, this was the Son of God. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned.

“The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation” (before the beginning of the Sabbath: Friday, at sunset), “that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day (for that Sabbath day was a high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

“When the even was come, there came *Joseph of Arimathaea*, an honorable counselor, who had not consented to the counsel and deed of them. This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And there came also *Nicodemus*, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

“Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a sepulcher, Joseph’s own tomb, which he had hewn out in a rock: wherein never man before was laid. There laid they Jesus, and rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulcher, and departed. And there was Mary Magdalene and other women, sitting over against the sepulcher, and beheld where and how His

body was laid. And they returned and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath day, according to the commandment.

“The next day the chief priests and Pharisees came unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulcher be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night, and steal Him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone and setting a watch.”

Hail, Thou once despisèd Jesus!
Hail, Thou Galilean King!
Thou didst suffer to release us;
Thou didst free salvation bring.
Hail, Thou agonizing Savior,
Bearer of our sin and shame!
By Thy merits we find favor:
Life is given through Thy name.

Paschal Lamb, by God appointed,
All our sins on Thee were laid;
By almighty love anointed,
Thou hast full atonement made.
All Thy people are forgiven,
Through the virtue of Thy blood:
Open is the gate of heaven;
Peace is made 'twixt man and God.

CHAPTER VII.

How Jesus Rose from the Dead.

“When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices that they might come and anoint Him.

“And when it was yet dark, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, they came bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

“And there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

“And the women said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

“When Mary Magdalene seeth the stone taken away from the sepulcher, she runneth to tell these things unto the Apostles.

“And they” (some of the women) “entered the sepulcher, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered His words, and returned from the sepulcher, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. And their words seemed unto them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

“And the (other) women entering the sepulcher, saw a young man sitting on the right hand side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And the angel said unto them, Be not affrighted; for I know, ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified. He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples, and Peter, that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulcher with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they anything to any man; for they were afraid.

“And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail! And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshiped Him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

“Then Mary Magdalene runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved (John), and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid Him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulcher.

So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulcher. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about his head not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulcher, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture that He must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again, and Peter was wondering in himself at all that which was come to pass.

“But Mary stood without at the sepulcher weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulcher, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?

“She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

“Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?

“She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away.

“Jesus saith unto her, Mary!

“She turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

“Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.

“Mary Magdalene went and told them that had been with Him, as they mourned and wept, that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her.” —

“Now, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept. And

if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day." —

"And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him. And He said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

"And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto Him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

"And He said unto them, What things?

"And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him. But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher; and when they found not His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it even so as the women had said; but *Him* they saw not.

"Then He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?* And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

"And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went: and He made as though He would have gone further. And they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

"And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him.

"And He vanished out of their sight.

“And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures? And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how He was known of them in breaking of bread. Neither believed they (all) them.

“Then, as the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you!

“But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

“And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them.

“Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you! As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

“But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But He said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.

“And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you! Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

“And Thomas answered and said unto Him, *My Lord and my God!*

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: *blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*”—

“After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias.

“And on this wise showed He Himself.

“There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas, called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee (James and John), and two other of His disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a-fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

“But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then saith Jesus unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered Him, No. And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

“Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved (John) saith unto Peter, It is the Lord.

“Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher’s coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

“As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to the land, full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask Him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

“This is now the third time that Jesus showed Himself to His disciples, after that He was risen from the dead.

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?

“He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee.

“He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

“He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?

“He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee.

“He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

“He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?

“Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee.

“Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake He, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He saith unto him, Follow me!

“Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following. Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

“Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me.

“Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?”

“After that, Jesus was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.”

“And last of all He was seen of me also (St. Paul).” —

Christ is arisen

From death's painful prison.

Now we rejoice with gladness;

Christ will end all sadness.

Kyrieleis! (Lord, have mercy!)

All the world had ended,

Had Jesus not ascended

From grave and death triumphantly.

For this, Lord Christ, we honor Thee.

Kyrieleis!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Now we rejoice with gladness;

Christ will end all sadness.

Kyrieleis!

CHAPTER VIII.

How Jesus Ascended into Heaven.

“Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:* teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

“Afterward He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen. And He said unto them, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.* And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

“And Jesus showed Himself alive to the Apostles after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

“And being assembled together with them, He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of me.” (The disciples were to receive the Holy Ghost in an exceptional measure.) “And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father

upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?

“And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the world.

“So, then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven, and while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight, and He sat on the right hand of God.

“And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.

“And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet with great joy.”

Draw us to Thee,
For then shall we
Walk in Thy steps forever,
And hasten on
Where Thou art gone,
To be with Thee, dear Savior.

Draw us to Thee,
Lord, lovingly;
Let us depart with gladness,
That we may be
Forever free
From sorrow, grief and sadness.

Draw us to Thee,
O grant that we
May find the road to heaven;
Direct our way,
Lest we should stray,
And from Thy paths be driven.

Draw us to Thee
That also we
Thy heavenly bliss inherit,
And ever dwell
Where sin and hell
No more can vex our spirit.

Draw us to Thee
Unceasingly,
Into Thy kingdom take us;
Let us fore'er
Thy glory share,
Thy saints and joint-heirs make us.

CHAPTER IX.

How the Holy Ghost was Poured Out upon the Disciples, How Peter Preached the First Pentecostal Sermon, and How a Christian Congregation was Gathered in Jerusalem.

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come” (the fiftieth day after the Passover, the Jewish feast of the firstfruits of the harvest), “they were all with one accord in one place.

“The number of names together were about an hundred and twenty.

“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues (languages), as the Spirit gave them utterance.

“And” (because of the feast) “there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

“Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

“But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: for these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. (Joel 3, 1—5.) Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of

God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of joy with Thy countenance. (Ps. 16.) Men and brethren, let me speak freely unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on His throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of *Christ*, that *His* soul was not left in hell, neither *His* flesh did see corruption. *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.* For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand, until I make Thy foes my footstool. (Ps. 110.) Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, *that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

“Peter said unto them, *Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins*, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord, our God, shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and

the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

“And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread” (the Lord’s Supper), “and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the Apostles. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.”

Now do we pray God the Holy Ghost
For the true faith which we need the most,
And that He defend us, when life is ending,
And from exile home we shall be wending.

Lord, have mercy!

Shine in our hearts, O most precious Light,
That we Jesus Christ may know aright,
Clinging to our Savior, whose blood has bought us,
Who again to our true home has brought us.

Lord, have mercy!

Thou sweetest Love, grace on us bestow,
Set our hearts with heavenly fire aglow,
That with hearts united we love each other,
Of one mind, in peace with every brother.

Lord, have mercy!

Thou highest Comfort in every need!
Grant that neither shame nor death we heed,
That e’en then our courage may never fail us,
When at last th’ Accuser shall assail us.

Lord, have mercy!

CHAPTER X.

The Creed.

We shall now proceed to consider THE SECOND CHIEF PART of Dr. Martin Luther’s Catechism, which treats of the THREE ARTICLES OF THE HOLY CHRISTIAN CREED.

These Three Articles (links, parts) read thus:

“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

“And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

“I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.”

These Three Articles date from the very earliest times of the New Testament Christian Church. They are also called the APOSTLES' CREED, or simply, the CREED. “Creed” is derived from the Latin word *credo*, which means: I believe. These three articles contain in a very brief form the doctrine which God has revealed in the Bible, to the end that we should believe it and be saved by it. The Creed is the Christian flag or banner, by which the Christians are distinguished from all other people.

These three articles are taken, not from the Law, but from the GOSPEL, from *the glad tidings of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, our Savior.*

There is, you must know, *a vast difference between the Law and the Gospel.* And you must mark well this difference and seek to understand it aright.

True, the Law and the Gospel, both, are God's doctrine. And both are contained in the Bible.

But:—

1. The Law, the doctrine which tells us how we are to be, what we are to do and what not to do, this doctrine we know to some extent by nature. Of the Gospel, however, we — by nature — know absolutely nothing; the Gospel is a mystery of God, which God has revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

2. The Law tells us how *we* are to be and what we are to do and what not to do. But the Gospel tells us how *God* is minded toward us and what He has done, and still does, for our salvation.

3. Thus the Law demands, and it threatens and condemns us sinners. But the Gospel promises and gives and seals unto us forgiveness of sins and life and salvation.

4. The Law was given us chiefly for this purpose, that we should not live on securely and carelessly in sin, but should tremble

at our sins and the wrath of God and the damnation deserved. But the Gospel is then to make us joyfully and firmly trust and rely upon the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and live and die in such grace as dear children of God.

Do you now see the difference between the Law and the Gospel?

From the Gospel, then, are taken the Three Articles of the Holy Christian Creed, or, as we briefly call it, the Creed.

And this Creed is BELIEVED by the whole true Christian Church on earth. You, too, should *believe* it. Even as it says in the Creed: "I believe," etc.

What does that mean: to believe?

To believe means to *know the Gospel of God in the Bible, to accept the same as true, and with firm confidence to trust and rely upon it.*

Let me explain this matter more fully.

The real and true meaning of "believing" is, that a man with firm confidence trust and rely upon the Gospel of God.

But how can a man do that, except he first hear and know the Gospel? The Bible says: "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" Rom. 10, 14. If a man is firmly and confidently to trust and rely upon the Gospel of God, he must first hear and know the Gospel, must have a knowledge of it. That is a matter of course. And thus you understand that the *knowledge* of the Gospel is the first part, and the necessary foundation, of true believing.

But even though a man have heard and know the Gospel of God and thus have the necessary knowledge, yet he cannot trust and rely upon the Gospel — if he does not accept the same as true. Many people know the Gospel, but they do not accept it as true. Can they, with firm confidence, trust and rely upon it? They certainly cannot. So the second part of faith is this, that a man accept the Gospel as true, that he give it assent. This *assent* is the second part, and the further necessary foundation, of faith. The Bible speaks of this when it says: "He that believeth not the Son" (he that does not accept the word of the Son of God as God's Word and, therefore, as truth) "shall not see life," John 3, 36.

However, with all knowledge and all assent, a man does not really believe, if he does not with firm confidence trust and rely upon God's Gospel. What good can it do me to know the Gospel

and also to accept it as the truth, if I do not confide in it, if I do not firmly trust and rely upon it? The devils also know the Gospel and accept it as true; but they cannot trust and rely upon it, they cannot place any confidence in it; so what good does it do them? If you know the Gospel of God and accept it as true, then proceed and avail yourself of it, trust in it, rely upon it, place confidence in it, depend upon it—yea, avail *yourself* of it, place *your* trust and confidence in it in life and death, *stake your hopes upon it*—do this: and you will live forever, and you will joyfully perceive and behold and see that such confidence is well founded, that it is not false and delusive. Thus *confidence* is the third part of faith, but it is the chief and all-important part, without which faith is not faith at all. Hence the Bible, to show what faith is, has the Apostle say: “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day,” 2 Tim. 1, 12. And Job is made to say in the Bible: “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another,” Job 19, 25—27.

He spake to me: “Hold fast by me,
I am thy Rock and Castle;
I wholly give myself for thee,
For thee I strive and wrestle;
For I am thine, and thou art mine,
Henceforth my place is also thine;
The Foe shall never part us.”

CHAPTER XI.

The First Article of the Holy Christian Creed.

The First Article of the holy Christian Creed reads thus:

“*I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.*”

And the explanation which Dr. Martin Luther has given in his Small Catechism reads thus:

“I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them; also cloth-

ing and shoes, meat and drink, house and home, wife and children, fields, cattle, and all my goods; that He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life; that He defends me against all danger, and guards and protects me from all evil; and all this purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all which it is my duty to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true."

As you see, the First Article of the holy Christian Creed treats of *God the Father*, the First Person in the Holy Trinity, and of *the Creation*, which work is ascribed to God the Father, although God the Son and God the Holy Ghost created the world no less than did the Father.

Of the Holy Trinity and the Persons therein, and of the Creation, I have spoken in earlier chapters (ch. 7 and 3 of Part One). In the present chapter I merely wish to show how you should *apply this doctrine to yourself* and, by faith, take comfort in it.

The First Article puts into your mouth the words: "I believe in God the Father."

Which is the true and proper sense in which you should speak these words?

God, that is, the First Person in the Holy Trinity, is here called "Father," because He is the eternal Father of the eternal Son, of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But by this our very Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has redeemed us poor, fallen sinners and reconciled us unto Him, He is, and desires to be, also *our* true Father. And we are to be His dear children. And so you are to say: "I believe in God the Father," that is: I believe, and rely upon it, that the eternal Father of my dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is, through Him, also my Father, my dear Father.—With the words: "I believe in God the Father," you draw nigh unto the great and glorious God, yea, with these words, if you understand and speak them aright, you cast yourself into His outstretched arms and say: "O my God, I, that am a poor, lost, and condemned sinner, am now infinitely happy. Thou hast sent Thy dear Son, and He has, by His suffering and death, reconciled me unto Thee. Thou hast sent Thy Holy Spirit in the Word, and He has called me unto Thee, that I should be Thy child. Thou dost stretch out Thine arms unto me and wouldst clasp me

to Thy paternal bosom. And lo! now I am here and I place my confidence in Thee, that Thou, great God, art my Father. I trust and rely upon Thee, I commit myself unto Thee in life and death, in time and eternity. Yes, I believe in Thee, my God and Father!"

Thus you have an excellent Father, even the *Almighty*, the *Maker of heaven and earth*. What good thing, then, can you lack?

And in such faith, in such confidence, you regard your whole life as in His hand.

You say: "I believe that God has made me and all creatures, that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses." For though you were born of father and mother, yea, though by reason of sin, in which you were conceived and born, you are subject to weaknesses and frailties, still it was God's creative hand that made you and gave you everything you have in body and soul. Hence David, the King and Prophet, says by the Holy Ghost: "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well," Ps. 139, 14.

You say: "I believe that God has made me and all creatures . . . and still preserves them." For though it would seem as if you were caught in the wheelwork of nature's laws and the course of the world, and would in the end be crushed, yet God regards you with paternal care and preserves you — preserves you until death, and even in the very midst of death. The Bible says: "He is not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being," Acts 17, 27. And: "He upholdeth all things by the word of His power," Hebr. 1, 3.

Now, for your bodily preservation in this world God gives you "clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and home, wife and children, fields, cattle, and all your goods" — according as you have need. He "richly and daily provides you with all that you need to support this body and life." For though it seems as if you were thrust upon yourself and must fight your own way in the struggle for an existence, yet you must know that you can do nothing without God; and, childlike, you must know and believe that God, your Father, is willing to give and actually gives you all that you need. Hence the Bible says: "The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing," Ps. 145, 16. And it

exhorts us: "Cast all your care upon Him; for He careth for you," 1 Pet. 5, 7.

You say: "I believe that God . . . *defends me against all danger, guards and protects me from all evil.*" For even though you think that much danger has really befallen you and that you have actually met with, and suffered, much evil and misfortune and need and heartache and misery, and have been filled with sorrow and sighing, yet you are to believe and be certain that God has a Father's hand in all these things and that He has wrapped all these things up, so to speak, in His grace and thus makes them work together for your temporal and eternal good. The Lord Jesus says: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered," Matt. 10, 29, 30. The Holy Ghost has His Apostle say: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God," Rom. 8, 28.

I would like to tell you right here, in just a few words, a Bible story — the story of Joseph, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, which story you may read in full in the Book of Genesis, ch. 37—47. — I have requested you once before to read these chapters.

Joseph's brethren envied and hated Joseph. And what did they finally do? They sold him to slave-traders. The slave-traders carried him away from his home into Egypt and sold him to an officer of the king's, called Potiphar. Here Joseph fared well, considering the circumstances. But not for any great length of time. For Potiphar's wicked wife slandered him and he was cast into prison. Also in prison Joseph fared well, considering the circumstances. There he met two of the king's officers, who were likewise in prison. To one of these, who was soon to be released from captivity, he told his woeful tale and begged the man to make mention of him to the king, that he, too, might be released. This the officer promised to do. But on regaining his liberty and happiness he forgot Joseph and left him in prison. Some time after that Pharaoh, the king, had dreams which God sent him. But no one could interpret them for him. Then the forgetful officer remembered Joseph and told the king about him, saying that he had the Spirit of God and could tell the king the divine interpretation of his dreams. Hereupon Joseph was fetched from prison, and he told the king the interpretation of his dreams —

told him that first seven years of plenty and then seven years of famine would come upon Egypt and the surrounding countries, and gave excellent counsel as to what ought to be done. For this he was made supreme ruler (under the king) of all the land of Egypt and was made glorious and happy. He was also enabled to save his father and his brethren and all his relatives from the famine.

Do you see how all the apparent evils that Joseph met with were simply God's gracious guidance, and how all things worked together for his good?

That Joseph was sold by his brethren was the means of bringing him to Egypt, where God had determined to make him and his people great. That he was slandered and cast into prison was the means of making him acquainted with the king's officer, or rather, to make the officer acquainted with him, so that later on he could mention him to the king. That the officer forgot him at first and left him in prison was the means of keeping him near at hand against the time when he was needed, lest he should have returned to his home. Thus in all the rough and stony paths that Joseph trod he was merely enjoying God's gracious guidance. With unerring hand God was leading him toward the goal to which He had purposed to bring him. Besides, Joseph was purged and purified in all these trials and learned to place his confidence in God, which is most excellent wisdom and leads to true happiness. Hence Joseph said to his brethren later on: "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive," Gen. 50, 20. And to you, reader, the Holy Scriptures say: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass," Ps. 37, 5.

Yes, dear reader, God, even your Father, controls also that which is evil and wicked, and makes all things work together for your good. Believe that firmly, be quiet, and trust in Him when the days are evil. Real evils there are none for children of God. To every child of God the Bible says: "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling," Ps. 91, 10. God graciously leads you aright toward a goodly goal. And while you will probably never become a prince in the land of Egypt, as Joseph did, what of that? In heaven you shall reign and shine forever. Try to bear that in mind.—

You say: "And all this purely out of fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me." No, indeed, you sinful creature, you are not worthy of the things that God does to you; you have not deserved any of these mercies. You must ever say with Jacob: "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant," Gen. 32, 10.

And now speak from your heart and say: "For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true."

Since, then, neither change nor coldness
In my Father's love can be,
Lo! I lift my hands with boldness,
As Thy child I come to Thee.
Grant me grace, O God, I pray Thee,
That I may with all my might,
All my life-time, day and night,
Love and trust Thee, and obey Thee;
And when this brief life is o'er,
Praise and love Thee evermore.

CHAPTER XII.

Of the Person of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Now I will tell you of Him who redeemed us from sin, death, and damnation, reconciled us unto God, and made us God's dear children: of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Him you must know aright, in Him you must believe aright. If you do not know Him aright, if you do not believe in Him aright, you cannot come to God. For He says: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me," John 14, 6.

Of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ I have already told you many things. I have told you different things which the Bible relates about Him. But now I would tell you briefly and clearly and in due order what the Bible *teaches* about Him—I would acquaint you with the *doctrine* of the Bible concerning Jesus Christ, that, having heard all these stories about Him, you may know and see clearly what you are to think and believe about Him.

The Lord Jesus Christ and the *Redemption* are treated of in THE SECOND ARTICLE OF THE HOLY CHRISTIAN CREED. And this Second Article reads thus:

“And (I believe) in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.”

And the explanation of this article which Dr. Martin Luther has given us in his Small Catechism reads thus:

“I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.”

Let me tell you what the NAMES of this our Lord signify.

Jesus means *Savior, Redeemer.*

Christ — Hebrew: *Messiah* — means *the Anointed.*

Jesus Christ, therefore, means: *The Anointed Savior.* And since among the people of God in the Old Testament the kings and high priests were anointed when they were inducted into their office, the true meaning of the names *Jesus Christ* is this: *The Savior whom God has installed and ordained.*

So much at present on the names of our Lord *Jesus Christ*.

Now let me speak to you of His *person, who He is.*

Who is our Lord *Jesus Christ?*

To this question the Second Article of our holy Christian Creed replies in these words: “And (I believe) in Jesus Christ, His” (God the Father’s) “only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.” And the explanation given by Dr. Luther says thus: “I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.”

In short, it says here that our Lord *Jesus Christ* is **GOD AND MAN.**

And the Bible tells us the same thing, as I shall now show you.

In the first place, the Bible says that Jesus Christ is God. For it says that Jesus Christ is *God the Father's only, or only-begotten, Son*, therefore the Second Person in the Holy Trinity, therefore God.

Ps. 2, 7 the Anointed One, the Messiah, the Christ, prophesying by the mouth of David, says thus: "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, *Thou art my Son*; this day" (from eternity) "have I begotten Thee." And accordingly we read Hebr. 1, 5: "Unto which of the angels said He (God) at any time, *Thou art my Son*, this day have I begotten Thee?" And Christ Himself says: "God so loved the world that He gave *His only-begotten Son*" (here Christ means Himself), "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3, 16. And the Holy Ghost says by the Apostle: "God . . . spared not *His own Son*, but delivered Him up for us all," Rom. 8, 32.

The Bible also says plainly and directly that Jesus Christ is *God the Lord*.

1 John 5, 20 it says of Jesus Christ: "This is *the true God*." And Rom. 9, 5: "Christ . . . who is over all, *God blessed forever. Amen.*" And the Prophet Jeremiah prophesies of Jesus that He should come, and says: "This shall be His name whereby He shall be called, **THE LORD (Jehovah) OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**," Jer. 23, 6. And the Apostle Thomas fell down before the risen Christ and said to Him: "My *Lord* and my *God*," John 20, 28.

And the Bible says that the Lord Jesus Christ has *divine attributes*, does *divine works*, receives *divine honor*; and also in this wise it plainly indicates that He is God.

The Apostle St. John calls the Lord Jesus Christ by this name: "The Word," and then he writes thus: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.—And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth," John 1, 1—5. 14. Here it is said of the *Word* that it already was in the beginning, hence that it is eternal; that it was with God and that it was God, hence

that it is a person distinct from the Father; that all things were made by it, hence that it is the Creator of all things; that it was made flesh, that is, man, and that the disciples beheld its glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father.—What clear and sublime testimony that our Lord Jesus Christ is true God!

Let me show you another passage which testifies that Jesus Christ is God's Son, and God, and higher than the angels and all creatures.

In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews it says: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His *Son*, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He *made the worlds*; who being the *brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power*, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of God” (the “Son,” then, clearly is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ); “being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He (God the Father) at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son? And again, when He bringeth in the First-Begotten into the world, He saith, *And let all the angels of God worship Him*. And of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O *God*, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. And” (furthermore God says in the Scriptures to Christ), “Thou, *Lord*, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: *but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.*”—Behold how Christ is magnified as God!

Yea, “all men should honor the Son, *even as they honor the Father*,” John 5, 23. And the Son is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

He is God, true God.

But He is also MAN, true man. This, too, is said in the Bible. "*The Word was made flesh*," man, says the Holy Ghost John 1, 14. "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, *made of a woman*," Gal. 4, 4. So, then, "there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the man Christ Jesus*," 1 Tim. 2, 5.

Nineteen hundred years ago God the Son was made man. And that He was made a real, true man you saw clearly — did you not? — from the Bible stories that I told you about Him. He had a human body. He had a human soul. He still has a human body and a human soul. In the garden of Gethsemane He said to His disciples: "*My soul* is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," Matt. 26, 38. When He was risen from the dead and appeared to His disciples, He said: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," Luke 24, 39. Thus He was also received up before their eyes into heaven and sat on the right hand of God.

Thus our Lord Jesus Christ has — mark this well! — two NATURES: the *divine* nature and the *human* nature.

But He is only ONE PERSON. There is but one Lord Jesus Christ; He is God and man in one person. God the Son has received the human nature into His person.

A great deal might be said on this subject. But, however much one may say — our poor reason will never comprehend and fathom this matter, which calls for faith, faith in the Word of God.

For what purpose did God the Son put on the human nature?

To redeem and save us sinful, lost, and condemned people. Did He have to be true man to do that?

Yes, for He was sent, and He came, to fulfill the Law and to suffer and die as the substitute of all mankind. This He evidently could not have done, had He not been made true man.

Since, however, a mere man could not be the substitute of all men and could not bear the sins of the human race and the wrath of God and the curse of the Law, neither could satisfy the infinite justice of God, neither could conquer death and Satan, and hell — for this reason the eternal Son of God, the true God, was chosen, and Himself chose, to become man and our Redeemer. And He did become man and our Redeemer. The Bible says: "None of them" (no mere man) "can by any means redeem his brother, nor

give to God a ransom for him (for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever)," Ps. 49, 7. 8. "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons," Gal. 4, 4. 5.

Behold how exceeding great are the mercies of God, and how exceeding great is your dear Savior Jesus Christ, who so graciously redeemed you!

He lays aside His power divine,
A servant's form doth take,
In want and lowness He doth pine
Who heaven and earth did make.

He nestles at His mother's breast,
Her milk His food must be,
Whom saints and angels call the Blest,
For David's Root is He.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of the Office of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The OFFICE of the Lord Jesus, that whereunto God sent and anointed and ordained and installed Him, is that He should **SAVE US SINNERS.**

The Lord Jesus Himself says: "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved," John 3, 17. And again: "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost," Matt. 18, 11.

To make this supremely important matter thoroughly plain it is customary to divide the office of Jesus Christ into three parts and to say that He, in order to save us, took upon Him a *threefold office*: the office of a *prophet*, *priest*, and *king*.

1. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Prophet means preacher. The Lord Jesus is our Prophet, our Preacher. The prophet Moses prophesied of Him and said to the people of Israel: "The Lord, thy God, will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken," Deut. 18, 15. Accordingly, when the Lord Jesus was come and made man, the Father in heaven testified of Him, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am

well pleased; *hear ye Him*,” Matt. 17, 5. So the Lord Jesus is our Prophet, our Preacher, whom we are to hear.

What does He preach unto us?

The Lord Jesus preaches unto us that which no man could know, nor even guess, by nature: He preaches unto us *the Gospel, the glad tidings that God, through Him, would save us*. Hence the Bible says: “Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him,” John 1, 17. 18. The Lord Jesus preaches *Himself*, that He is the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

But *how* does the Lord Jesus preach unto us?

When He dwelt on earth, He preached with His own mouth and did great signs and wonders to confirm His preaching. He “was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,” Luke 24, 19.

But He preaches to us still, even now. He does it on this wise: His disciples, the Apostles, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, wrote down His sayings and His deeds, and by this same inspiration of the Holy Ghost they explained and set forth His saving doctrine, the Gospel of Christ, and proclaimed it and wrote it down. And this word of the Apostles, which thus is in deed and truth Jesus’ word, this word we have in the New Testament. Thus the New Testament is Jesus’ sermon-book, the book wherein He preaches. When we read this book, Jesus invariably preaches unto us. And when true pastors and preachers preach this word of the Apostles and of Jesus, Jesus preaches by them, in reality we then hear Jesus. Therefore He Himself says to His disciples and to all true preachers: “He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me,” Luke 10, 16. And thus the Lord Jesus says of any Christian that speaks the Gospel to his neighbor.

However, not only while He lived and dwelt on earth and not only now does the Lord Jesus preach the Gospel and is He our Prophet, He did the same, and was the same, from the beginning of the world and in the days of the Old Testament, before He had been made man. He, the eternal Son of the Father and promised Messiah, or Christ, He it was who spoke with Adam and Eve in Paradise, and who, when they were fallen into sin, preached and proclaimed the first Gospel message unto them. And whenever

God spoke with the people in the days of the Old Testament, it was *He*, God the Son, the promised Messiah and Christ, that spoke with them. He it was, furthermore, who by His Holy Spirit inspired the Prophets in the Old Testament with the Gospel promises and prophecies of His own future coming and redemptive work, and made them preach these things and write them down. Also the Old Testament is the sermon-book wherein the Lord Jesus, the eternal Son of God, preaches. Hence the Apostle, St. Peter, writes that “the Spirit of *Christ*, which was in them” (in the Prophets and writers of the Old Testament), . . . “testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow,” 1 Pet. 1, 11.

Thus the Lord Jesus Christ is our sole Prophet and Preacher, and we have no other prophet and preacher, we have no prophet and preacher save Him alone. He preaches unto us the true way to salvation.

This you must know and remember.

If any man would preach God’s Word unto you, but does not preach *Jesus’* word, and *Jesus’* word *only*, just as it is found in the Bible, you must not receive him and must not believe him. But if a man preach *Jesus’* word unto you, you shall receive him and believe him, for in that case *Jesus* is preaching unto you by that man. *Jesus*, and *Jesus only*, is your Prophet and Preacher. *Him* shall you hear, *Him* shall you believe. Then you will know for certain how to be saved.

Have you grasped this?

2. THE PRIESTLY OFFICE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The Church of God in the Old Testament, the people of Israel, had a great many priests. But over and above them all was the so-called *high priest*. He was the chief both of the priesthood and of the nation.

Foremost among the duties of the high priest were the following three. In the first place, he, as chief bishop or overseer, had to see to it that the people of God walked in all the commandments and statutes and judgments which God had given them through His servant Moses. In the second place, he had to bring the great annual sin-offering to make atonement for the frequent and manifold transgressions of the people. In the third place, he had to pray for the people.

But the priesthood of the Old Testament was not perfect. For he whose duty it was to see that the people transgressed not the Law, himself transgressed it. And he that offered up sacrifices for the sins of the people first had to offer up sacrifice for his own sins. And what did he offer up? A bullock and two goats and a ram. Now it is not possible that the blood of goats and of bulls should take away sins. And he that made intercession (prayer) for the people was in need of intercession on his own behalf. And then death, the wages of sin, did not suffer him, poor sinner that he was, to continue; and thus he was ever succeeded by a new high priest. For this reason the priesthood of the Old Testament was not perfect.

What good would it do us, then, if we had such an Old Testament high priest? “*Such an high priest became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's,*” Hebr. 7, 26. 27.

Isn't that so?

Now, thanks be to God, such a high priest we have. *It is our Lord Jesus Christ.* He is our true high priest. The high priests of the Old Testament were but shadows and figures of Him.

Mark what our Lord Jesus Christ, as our true High Priest, does for us. We people ought to keep the Law of God. But we have not kept it, we will not keep it, we cannot keep it, because, since the fall of Adam, we are, by nature, wicked and born sinners. And thus we have incurred the curse of God and death and damnation.

Our Lord Jesus Christ saw that from eternity.

And now He is become our true High Priest.

And what has He done for us as such?

In the first place, *He perfectly kept and fulfilled the Law of God* — but, mind you, *as our Substitute, for us and in our stead.* In accordance with His Father's will, in accordance with the Triune God's eternal counsel of grace, He came, was made man, became our Substitute, perfectly fulfilled, in our stead, the Law of God. And what *He* did shall be accounted as though *we* had done it; for He did it *for us.* Because He, as our Substitute, fulfilled all righteousness, God will now so regard and receive us as though we had fulfilled all righteousness. By *His* righteous-

ness *we* are made righteous. Thus we are redeemed from the grievous Law and from its demands and from its curse. The Bible, the Word of God, says: “When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, *made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law*,” Gal. 4, 4. 5. And: “As by one man’s (Adam’s) disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of *One* (Christ) *shall many be made righteous*,” Rom. 5, 19. His, His, *His* obedience is *our* righteousness, for it was rendered for us and in our stead.

In the second place, our true High Priest, Jesus Christ, also *brought an offering* for us. And what did He offer up for us? Bullocks, goats, and rams? Oh no! He offered up *Himself* for us. According to His Father’s will, according to the Triune God’s eternal counsel of grace, He came, was made man, became our Substitute, *bore, in our stead, the curse, the death and damnation which we had deserved*. For us He suffered, for us He died, all our punishment He bore. And thus He redeemed us from the curse, from death and damnation, for He bore all things *for us*. God punished *Him* for *our* guilt. Thus in Him we are free from guilt and punishment. The Bible, the Word of God, says: “*Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed*,” Is. 53, 4. 5. And: “Behold the Lamb of God, *which taketh away the sins of the world*,” John 1, 29. And again: “Christ His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree,” 1 Pet. 2, 24. And again: “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us,” Gal. 3, 13.

In the third place, He performs still another priestly function. He is also *our Advocate with His heavenly Father*. *He prays for us, makes intercession for us*. He refers to that which He did for us, and prays for us. Oh, how sorely we poor sinners need such intercession, such pleading on our behalf! But God surely accepts Christ’s pleading. The Father does not reject the pleading of His Son. The Bible, the Word of God, says: “*He is at the right hand of God, He also maketh intercession for us*,” Rom. 8, 34. And: “*He ever liveth to make intercession for them*,” Hebr. 7, 25. And again: “If any man sin, we have an *Advocate*¹⁾

1) Advocate = one that pleads for us.

with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. And He is the propitiation" (atonement) "for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," 1 John 2, 1. 2.

Thus our Lord Jesus Christ is our sole and true High Priest.

And now hearken! What Christ, your High Priest, has done for you, that you may and should trust in, rely upon. You may and should trust and rely upon it, *that God out of pure grace, for Jesus Christ your High Priest's sake, so regards and so receives you, as though you had, yourself, perfectly fulfilled the Law of God, and as though you had, yourself, perfectly expiated²⁾ all your sin.* For what Christ has done for you, that, of course, is yours. And you may and should trust and rely upon it, that your High Priest Jesus Christ ever makes intercession for you, poor sinner, with His heavenly Father by reason of His all-sufficient merit and bloody sacrifice which He rendered for you.

O you blessed creature, take advantage of this!

3. THE KINGLY OFFICE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The Lord Jesus Christ is also our *King*. The Bible says this often, everywhere. I will direct your attention to but two places. When the angel Gabriel announced to the Virgin Mary that she was to be the mother of Christ, he also spoke these words: "And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His *kingdom* there shall be no end," Luke 1, 33. And when the Jews accused the Lord Jesus falsely in Pontius Pilate's court, saying that He had made Himself king in opposition to Caesar, Jesus said: "*My kingdom is not of this world.*" And when Pilate, marveling at these words, asked Him: "Art Thou a King then?" He replied: "*Thou sayest that I am a King,*" John 18, 36. 37.

To be sure, the Lord Jesus is a King. He is King of kings. He is the true God and therefore has all power in heaven and on earth. And also as the Son of man He has all power in heaven and on earth. It was given Him. He Himself says: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth," Matt. 28, 18. And the Bible says: "God set Him (Jesus) at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but

2) Expiated = atoned for by suffering the punishment thereof.

also in that which is to come," Eph. 1, 20. 21. Even hell is within His kingdom; it is the prison of His kingdom.—This is called Christ's KINGDOM OF POWER. With power He rules over all creatures.

But this is not the kingdom we have in mind when we say that Jesus is our King. He is *our* King, most specially ours who are *His own, who believe in Him* and by faith call Him our Lord and Savior. Over *us* He rules, and He protects us right graciously with His infinite power, and will finally lead us into the glory of eternal life in heaven.

Christ is King of *Zion*. *Zion* is the congregation, the communion, the association, the whole number of those people who believe in Him, who in truth and from their hearts regard Him as their Savior, and love and honor Him. This His *Zion* He knows, for He searches the hearts. And this His *Zion* He governs by His Word and His Holy Spirit. And this His *Zion* He preserves by His Word and His Holy Spirit. And this His *Zion* He increases by His Word and His Holy Spirit. In this His *Zion* He rules by *grace*. Here He richly and daily forgives all sins. Here He leads them that are His as a faithful mother does her little child. He leads them in the paths of life and light. He shields His *Zion* from every foe, from every disaster. His *Zion* is safe beneath His scepter. O how gracious He is toward His *Zion*! And in granting His grace unto *Zion*, He mixes His grace with His infinite power. The King of the Kingdom of Power is also King of the KINGDOM OF GRACE. What I have just sketched with such few strokes of the pen, what I have said of *Zion*, that is Jesus Christ's *Kingdom of Grace*. Of this Kingdom of Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the Holy Scriptures speak in innumerable places, both in the Old and New Testament. I will quote but one: "Tell ye the daughter of *Zion*, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek," Matt. 21, 5; Zech. 9, 9.

And this His *Zion* He will finally lead to the glory of heaven. St. Paul the Apostle says: "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom," 2 Tim. 4, 18. There in eternal joy and bliss, *Zion*, delivered from all besetting sin, freed from every torturing evil, exempt from all reproach, shall shine forevermore with the light that proceeds from the face of the King, Jesus Christ; and that is Christ's KINGDOM OF GLORY.

Thus Jesus Christ is our King.

O man, seeing thy king, that great King, who is also thy Prophet and Priest, seeing He comes to thee so meek, so friendly, so gracious, and would save thee, make thee infinitely happy, oh, cast thyself down at His feet, and be His, His, His own in life and death, in time and eternity.

Son of God and Mary's Son,
Prophet, Priest, King, richly gifted,
Mediator, Mercy-throne,
On the tree for me uplifted:
Grant that I "My Jesus" Thee
Call in faith and lovingly.

Thou, my sweetest Jesus, wast
Born and dead for my salvation;
For what I in Adam lost
Thou hast wrought full reparation.
Grant that I in verity
Be Thine own eternally.

Sinners' Friend, to Thee I owe
Every bliss and all salvation;
Through Thy death to life I go,
Through Thy grave to heavenly station:
God afore His judgment-throne
Counts Thy merits as my own.

Death and hell, O Victor blest,
Thou hast vanquished and subdued;
Hast with peace and sweetest rest
Now my death and grave imbued:
When I rise, Thy victory
Crowns me in eternity.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of the State of Humiliation of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

When we behold our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as described to us in the Bible, we see Him in *two different states: in a State of Humiliation and in a State of Exaltation.*

I shall now show you the *State of Humiliation* of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, you remember, is true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin

Mary. Now you might think that this was the State of Humiliation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He was made man. But that is not so. Not one particle of His divine nature, not one particle of His divine attributes, not one particle of His divine majesty and glory, did our Lord Jesus Christ lose, lay aside, give up, in becoming man; that was no humiliation. He received the human nature into His divine person. And instead of losing thereby any of His divine glory, He rather communicated to His human nature all the glory of God. His human nature partakes of the glory of His divine nature.

Well, *what is* the State of Humiliation of our Lord Jesus Christ? It is this, that our Lord Jesus Christ, as regards His human nature and His conversation in such nature, *did not always nor fully use the divine glory* which was communicated to such human nature and which this nature therefore had and possessed.

Is that, too, hard to understand? Shall I repeat it in simpler words?

Then listen!

When the eternal Son of God the Father was made man, He filled His human nature with divine majesty and glory: with divine omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, and all manner of divine attributes. Also His human nature was now omnipresent, almighty, all-knowing, and had all manner of divine attributes and glory. But as regards His human nature and His walk in such nature, our Lord Jesus Christ did not always nor fully *use* and *manifest* the divine glory which He had communicated to His human nature, but, as a rule, lived and walked as other men do.

Do you now understand what is meant?

The Bible says: “Christ Jesus . . . being in the form of God” (having and possessing in His human nature all the glory of God), “thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (regarded not His divine glory as a thing to be displayed by constant using, as a conqueror boastingly displays His robbery, or spoils): “but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man” (an ordinary man), “He humbled Himself, and became obedient” (to the will of God) “unto death, even the death of the cross,” Phil. 2, 5—8.

That is the State of Humiliation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This State of Humiliation lasted throughout the time that

He dwelt on earth and is described in the Second Article with these words: "Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried."

If you think of the Bible stories that I told you, you can easily see how our Lord Jesus Christ was, during the time designated, in a state of humiliation.

Having been conceived through the wonderful working of the Holy Ghost, He was born of the Virgin Mary, was handled, nourished, and nursed the same as any other child. He grew, increased, learned to walk, learned to talk and understand, learned to read and write, increased in stature and wisdom, like an ordinary child. He ate and drank, He waked and slept, hungered and thirsted, grew weary and faint, was refreshed and strengthened, was saddened and cheered, like an ordinary person. He was poor and lowly, more so than other men. He said Himself: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head," Matt. 8, 20. He was tempted like as we, *yet without sin*. No, indeed, sin there was none in His human nature. He was perfectly holy. He knew no sin. And, as I have said, He had and possessed in His human nature all the majesty of God. But from His conception and birth down to His death and burial He kept it hidden for the most part and did not use it, at least not fully and constantly.

At times, however, yea, oftentimes, it was as when the dark clouds that veil the heavens are rent asunder and the bright and golden rays of the sun burst gloriously forth: at times, even oftentimes, the Lord Jesus Christ emitted from out of His humiliation rays of His majesty and glory, namely, when He did miracles, and when He was transfigured before His disciples, and when He spoke and acted as only Almighty God can and dare speak and act. Such manifestations of His divine majesty and glory from out His humiliation the Apostle St. John has in mind when he writes: "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, *and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*," John 1, 14. But invariably these rays of glory would withdraw behind the cloud of voluntarily assumed humility.

In the greatest depths of His humiliation you see the Lord Jesus Christ in the story of His suffering and death. Unspeakable

tortures He suffered in body and soul. Reproach and mockery He endured. On the accursed tree, on the cross, He died. The door of the sepulcher closed upon His lifeless body.

And *why* did Christ humble Himself so completely?

To *redeem* us lost and condemned people, to redeem us by becoming, as you know from the Priestly Office of Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Could He have been that and could He have done that, if, according to His human nature, He had fully and constantly used His divine majesty? No. To be that and do that, He must needs humble Himself.

And now I will ask you a number of questions touching Christ's work of redemption. And I will let Dr. Luther's Small Catechism and the Bible furnish you with the answers to these questions. See to it that these answers sink down into your heart and again proceed out of your heart.

WHEREFROM did Christ redeem you and purchase and win you?

“From all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil.”

Yes, Christ redeemed you *from all sins*, for He took all your sins upon Himself. As it is written: “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all,” Is. 53, 6. Therefore you sinners are freed from the *guilt* of sin: your sin is no longer imputed to you, no longer laid to your charge. And you are now free from the *punishment* of sin: the curse which you merited by your sin is no longer upon you. And you are now free from the *dominion* of sin: your sins cannot distress and enslave you, you can cheerfully mock and resist them.

And thus Christ also redeemed you *from death*. For death is the wages, the penalty, of sin; and from sin Christ has made you free, as I just told you. Temporal death you need no longer fear; you need no longer be afraid to die, because eternal death, hell and damnation no longer have any power over you. Through temporal death you now enter into eternal life. As it is written: “Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light,” 2 Tim. 1, 10.

And thus Christ furthermore redeemed you *from the power of the Devil*. The Devil no longer has any power over you, no longer has any right to you. He can no longer accuse you, he is cast down. And his temptations you can victoriously withstand. Christ bruised the Devil's head, as was promised in the first Gos-

pel message. And it is written: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the Devil," 1 John 3, 8.

Now say: "O blessed man that I am!"

WHEREWITH did Christ redeem you and purchase and win you from all sins, from death, and from the power of the Devil?

"Not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death."

Nay, with gold or silver you could not be redeemed. Gold and silver may serve to redeem slaves and pay penalties among men, but it would not serve to redeem you from all sins, from death, and from the power of the Devil. The ransom with which you are redeemed from all sins, from death, and from the power of the Devil, this ransom is Christ the Lord's holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death. For hereby He, as your Substitute, rendered satisfaction for you and paid the penalty of your guilt and your sins. The Bible says: "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as a Lamb without blemish and without spot," 1 Pet. 1, 18. 19. And: "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John 1, 7.

Now say: "O Thou friendliest Lord Jesus!"

And FOR WHAT PURPOSE did Christ redeem you and purchase and win you from all sins, from death, and from the power of the Devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death?

"That I may be His own."

Yes, Christ bought you with a price and redeemed you from most dreadful slavery. He is now your Lord, and you are His own. Rejoice exceedingly! For He is a good Lord, and blessed are they that are His.—I shall say more about this matter in the next chapter.

WHOM did Christ redeem, purchase, and win from all sins, from death, and from the power of the Devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death? And whom did Christ thus make His own?

In considering this question, you must be personally conscious of all that you have hitherto heard and learned, apply all to yourself, and, in deepest humility, but also in jubilant faith, lay your

hand on your heart and answer thus: “*ME, a lost and condemned creature.*”

Yes, you, you, you lost and condemned sinner did Christ redeem; you, you, you are His own. Thus you must firmly believe. Thus the Apostle St. Paul applies all to himself, appropriates all to himself, and says, speaking of Christ: “Who loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*,” Gal. 2, 20.

Do you ask how you may know with such certainty that Christ has redeemed even *you*, and that *you* are His own?

You may know it by this: Because the Word of God says that Christ redeemed *all* lost and condemned creatures. If He redeemed *all* creatures, He surely redeemed *you* — did He not?

Behold and see how the Word of God says that Christ redeemed *all* men. It says: “The Son of Man is come to save *that which was lost*,” Matt. 18, 11. And: “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away *the sin of the world*,” John 1, 29. And again: “He is the propitiation for our sins: *and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world*,” 1 John 2, 2. Yea, of the very wickedest of wicked men, of those who lead others astray, it says: “They deny the Lord *that bought them*, and bring upon themselves swift destruction,” 2 Pet. 2, 1. So even those who deny Christ and, therefore, are damned, even those Christ, nevertheless, bought, redeemed.

He redeemed *all* men. Consequently He redeemed also *you*. Only do not deny this truth! Do not cast it away! Believe it! Accept it! Rejoice in it! Hold it fast! Gladly be His own! Thus you shall be saved.

So much about the State of Humiliation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us all with gladsome voice
Praise the God of heaven,
Who, to bid our hearts rejoice,
His own Son hath given.

To this vale of tears He comes,
Here to serve in sadness,
That with Him in heaven's fair homes
We may reign in gladness.

We are rich, for He was poor;
Is not this a wonder?
Therefore praise God evermore,
Here on earth and yonder!

CHAPTER XV.

Of the State of Exaltation of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Now, what is *the State of Exaltation* of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

By the State of Exaltation we mean this, that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, *according to His human nature, fully and constantly uses the divine majesty communicated to His human nature.*

Let me explain this a little.

The divine omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, and all divine attributes, in a word, the divine majesty and glory, with which the Lord Jesus, when He was made man, had filled His human nature — this divine majesty and glory of His human nature He no longer keeps hidden and concealed, He no longer abstains from using, as He did in the State of Humiliation. No, He now uses and manifests fully and continually the divine majesty and glory of His human nature. When the Lord Jesus emerged from the State of Humiliation and entered upon the State of Exaltation, His human nature lived and moved and beamed and shone fully and continually in all divine majesty and glory. He now no longer subjected Himself, with respect to His human nature and His walk and His appearing in such nature, to the laws that are binding upon us poor creatures. He now, to mention but one example, suffered His human nature to use the divine *omnipresence* communicated unto it; He no longer went from place to place, He no longer opened the door when about to enter a house or a room; but He appeared or vanished in whatsoever manner or place He chose. Think of the Bible story I told you, how on the day of His resurrection from the dead, having gone in to tarry with two of His disciples at Emmaus, He vanished out of their sight and soon afterward suddenly came and stood in the midst of His disciples who were assembled in Jerusalem, the doors being shut for fear of the Jews. And thus He used thenceforth, and thus He still uses, fully and continually, according to His human nature, all the divine majesty communicated to it. The angels of heaven witness this. And we shall witness it when we will be in heaven, and all men will witness it on Judgment Day.

Of the State of Exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ Holy Scripture speaks and says: “*Wherfore*” (because, in obedience to the will of God, in order to redeem us, He had humbled Himself unto death) “*God also hath highly exalted Him*, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,” Phil. 2, 9—11.

The State of Exaltation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ began when He was quickened in the grave. And the Second Article of the Christian Creed describes this state in the following terms: “He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.”

These several points we shall consider severally, one by one.

1. “HE DESCENDED INTO HELL.”

When our Lord Jesus Christ was quickened in the grave on Sunday morning, He first descended into hell.

Hell is the prison and place of torment, where the damned are kept, both men and angels.

Into this place, I say, our Lord Jesus Christ descended on Sunday morning when He was quickened in the grave.

Thither He went as “He that liveth,” no longer in humility, but in divine majesty and glory.

And what did He do there? He showed Himself to hell as its conqueror; He showed Himself as the promised Woman’s Seed who now had bruised the serpent’s head. He heralded His victory and triumphed over all His hellish foes.

Hereof Holy Scripture speaks in the following words: “Christ was put to death in the flesh” (in the humiliation of His human nature), “but quickened by (or in) the Spirit” (in the glory of His divine nature): “by which” (divine glory) “also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison,” 1 Pet. 3, 18. 19. And: “He spoiled principalities and powers” (of hell), “He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it,” Col. 2, 15.

Rejoice that your Savior thus descended into hell. The Devil knows Him now and trembles. Hell now no longer has any power

over you if you hold on to Christ. And what can the unbelieving, Christ-hating, wicked, boasting, threatening world do to you? You perceive that she, too, lies at Christ your Savior's feet.

Hell and its prince, the Devil,
Now of their power are shorn,
I now am safe from evil,
And sin I laugh to scorn;
Grim Death with all his might
Cannot my soul affright;
He is a powerless form,
Howe'er he rage and storm.

The world against me rageth,
Its fury I disdain;
Though bitter war it wageth,
Its work is all in vain.
No trouble troubles me,
My heart from care is free,
Misfortune now is play,
And night as bright as day.

2. THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD.

When Christ had been quickened on the third day after His death, He victoriously and with a glorified body and in all the glory of God issued from the grave and manifested Himself unto His disciples as the Living One and as the conqueror of sin, death, Satan, and hell. He showed and manifested Himself unto them as the Son of God and the true Messiah and Savior, as the true Atoner and Redeemer, as the Prince and Giver of life.

And He did that for a space of forty days by many manifestations and proofs, and spoke with them of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Grace and Glory, which He now had founded and set up.

And what His disciples heard and saw during those forty days they have related to us in the Bible by the Holy Spirit.

And we believe their unanimous and powerful testimony, which is a testimony of the Holy Ghost. *We believe that Jesus Christ on the third day rose again from the dead.*

And this is a great comfort to us. Yea, this is the crown of all our comfort and the evidence of all our faith. What? That Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

For:

If Christ were not risen from the dead, if He had been swallowed up and held by death — then He would not be the Son of

God, not the true Messiah and Savior; then He would not be the true Atoner and Redeemer; then He would not be the Prince of life and He that gives to us eternal life. The Bible says: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished," 1 Cor. 15, 17, 18.

"But now *is* Christ risen from the dead," says the Bible, 1 Cor. 15, 20.

And this resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, proves clearly and beyond dispute three things.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord, proves, first, *that He is, indeed, the Son of God and the true Messiah and Savior, and that His doctrine is the truth.*

In the days of His flesh, that is, of His humiliation, the Lord Jesus had, as you know, done many signs and wonders to prove that He was, indeed, the Son of God and the true Messiah and Savior, and that His doctrine was the truth. But the foremost and greatest sign He had repeatedly and very emphatically promised and foretold, viz., that on the third day He would rise again from the dead. When one day, for example, the Jews desired of Him a special sign that He was Christ, the Messiah, He said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days? But He spake of the temple of *His body*. When, therefore, He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said," John 2, 19—22. Similar predictions of His resurrection you can find in abundance, if you read the Bible. And now tell me: If the Lord Jesus Christ were not indeed the Son of God and the true Messiah and Savior, could He then have risen from the dead as He had foretold? He surely could not. Hence, from the fact that He did rise you see clearly and unquestionably that He is indeed the Son of God and the true Messiah and Savior, and that His doctrine is the truth. Hence the Bible also says: "He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness" (that is, according to His holy divinity which permeated, saturated, so to speak, and filled His human nature), "by the resurrection from the dead," Rom. 1, 4.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord, proves, secondly, *that God the Father has accepted the offering of His Son for the reconciliation of the world.*

Christ took the sin of all the world upon Himself. And He offered Himself for the sin of all the world. He bore all the curse which all the world had heaped upon itself by its sins, and He died. In this manner He sought, as the Substitute of the world, to atone for the sins of the world, to pay the world's debt, to satisfy the offended justice of God, to reconcile God to the world, to bring about a reconciliation of the world unto God. — Did God the Father accept this offering of His Son for the reconciliation of the world? Yes, God the Father did accept this offering of His Son for the reconciliation of the world. For He raised His Son up from the dead. That was as if God had said: "It is enough. The sins of the world are atoned for. The debt of the world is paid in full. My justice is satisfied. I am reconciled to the world. The reconciliation of the world unto me is accomplished." Mark well: In raising His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, from the dead, God the Father, solemnly and in very deed, declared and made known that by Christ's offering the whole world's and your sins have been atoned and done away, and that for the whole world and for you the righteousness that avails in His sight has been purchased in which every man can stand before Him and be saved. Hence the Apostle Paul says: "Christ was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (righteousness), Rom. 4, 25.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord, proves, thirdly, *that all believers shall rise unto life eternal.*

"Because I live, ye shall live also," says Christ to all His disciples, to all believers, John 14, 19. Sin is abolished, and with it death, the wages of sin. Christ lives. He has conquered death. His life is *your* life. His victory over death is *your* victory over death. For His life and resurrection is the whole world's life and resurrection. His victory over death is the whole world's victory over death. His life, His resurrection, His victory over death, He offers to you and the whole world. Will you have it? Oh, accept it! Believe! Believe in Jesus Christ! Thus you will have it. Thus you, too, will live, rise, conquer death. You will live, though you were dead. In reality you will never die. For through death you will enter eternal life, and you will rise again on the last day. He says: "I am the Resurrection and the Life:

he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die,” John 11, 25, 26.

Yes, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord, proves clearly and beyond dispute that He is indeed the Son of God and the true Messiah and Savior, and that His doctrine is the truth; that God the Father has accepted the offering of His Son for the reconciliation of the world; that all believers will rise unto life eternal. Now believe, believe in your Lord Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead!

Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won:
Lo! our Sun's eclipse is o'er,
Lo! He sets in blood no more.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;
Christ has burst the gates of hell.
Death in vain forbids His rise;
Christ has opened Paradise.

3. “HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN AND SITTETH AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY.”

On the fortieth day after His resurrection our Savior ascended into heaven. You saw that from the Bible history which I related unto you. Visibly, in and according to His human nature, He ascended on high, unto heaven, and entered into the glory of His Father.

From this ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ you can, if you understand it aright, derive great and strong comfort and a blessed and sure hope.

Hearken!

The ascension of the Lord Jesus must not be so regarded as if the Lord Jesus had, for His own benefit, for His own blessedness, ascended into heaven and entered into the glory of His Father. It is not as if He had said: “Now I have finished all my work on earth, now I am going to leave and go to heaven and enter into the glory of my Father.” That is not the true meaning of the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. If that were its true meaning, there would be little comfort for us in the ascension of the Lord Jesus; then we should rather have to regret and mourn His ascension and say: “Alas! Our Lord Jesus is gone away

from us! As far as He is concerned, we can only rejoice that He is now in heaven and in the glory of His Father; but as for us, we no longer have Him now, He is no longer with us."

No. The ascension of the Lord Jesus must be viewed in an altogether different light. As *our Savior, as our Substitute, for us, for our benefit*, the Lord Jesus ascended to heaven and entered into the glory of His Father. May I speak after the manner of men, after the manner of a child? The Lord Jesus ascended up to heaven and rapped at the door. And He spoke thus: "I desire to go into heaven and enter into the glory of my Father. But I come, not for myself, but *for mankind*, whom I have redeemed; I come as *their Substitute*. *For them*, the poor sinners, I would take possession of heaven, seeing I acquired it for them with my blood and death. I am the Brother, the Savior, the Substitute of all poor sinners; if heaven is now opened to me, it will be, and thereby is, opened *to them* — they can go into heaven and into heaven's glory." Thus He spoke. And lo! the gates of heaven opened wide, and the heavenly host shouted "Welcome!" and the Father stretched out His arms to Him — to Him who came *for us*, to take possession of heaven *for us* and to prepare a place there *for us*. Hence the Lord Jesus said in the night when He suffered and died: "In my Father's house are many mansions. . . . *I go to prepare a place for you*," John 14, 2. — *For us*, then, the Lord Jesus took possession of heaven, *for us* He thus prepared a place in glory, and *for us* He now keeps heaven open and keeps a place prepared where we shall be forevermore. Is not this a great comfort and a blessed and sure hope? For this reason the Holy Ghost says in the Holy Scriptures unto Christ: "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also," Ps. 68, 19; Eph. 4, 8. Yes, Christ has demolished our house of captivity and ascended on high, into heaven, and gives us poor sinners and rebellious people heavenly gifts, yea, heaven itself.

And I will tell you another thing about the ascension of the Lord Jesus. — Do you think the Lord Jesus is far away from us now, because He ascended into heaven and entered into the glory of His Father? If you think thus, you are very much mistaken. I will tell you a word which God has spoken. It reads thus: "He that descended" (that is Christ, who came to earth and descended into the lowest depths of humiliation) "is the same also that

ascended far above all heavens, that He might fill all things," Eph. 4, 10. Do you hear? Do you understand? Christ ascended, *not to disappear into a distant heaven*, but He ascended *far above all heavens*, and He *now fills all things*, He is now present everywhere, and that not in and according to His divine nature merely, but in and according to His *human nature*; for it was in this nature and according to this nature that He ascended. He entered into the glory of His Father, and it is part and parcel of the glory of His Father that He is present everywhere. Hence Christ, too, is now present everywhere in and according to His human nature. And hence His parting words to His disciples, when He was about to ascend into heaven, were these: "*Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world*," Matt. 28, 20. Yes, your Savior, who ascended into heaven, is with you. And this, too, is a great comfort, a great, sweet comfort.

And I will tell you still another thing about the ascension of the Lord Jesus. *He now sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.* David says by the Holy Ghost: "The Lord said unto my Lord (Christ): Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool," Ps. 110, 1. And St. Mark writes by the Holy Spirit: "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God," Mark 16, 19. What is the right hand of God? A hand of flesh and bones? Oh, no. The right hand of God is the divine majesty and power with which God, being everywhere present, governs all things. There your Savior sits. Hence He, also according to His human nature, is omnipresent and governs all things with divine majesty and power. He governs *everything* with divine majesty and power, everything. And being the Savior, He puts this almighty government or dominion, which extends over all things, to this special use: He governs and protects them that are His, that believe in Him as their Savior. He is the Head of the Church, exalted to the right hand of God. And the Church, the congregation of believers, is His body, as it were, His spiritual body. And He is present with His Church. He fills the Church with His gracious presence, and He governs and protects it with His almighty grace and leads it heavenward, toward that heaven which He opened and occupied for the Church. Thus God has delivered to our Savior the government of the world and especially the government of us, His Christians. The Bible says: "God

set Christ at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all" (that is, the Church is full of that Christ who fills all things), Eph. 1, 20—23.

What great comfort the ascension of Christ affords to you, to me, and all Christians! Who or what can harm us, seeing our Savior and Head and Lord is the Ruler of the world? Who or what can deprive us of heaven, whereof He has taken possession in our behalf?

We thank Thee, Jesus, dearest Friend,
That Thou didst into heaven ascend,
O mighty God, Immanuel;
Make soul and body strong and well.
Hallelujah!

Ascended to His throne on high,
He yet is to us always nigh;
Thus God and man He ever reigns,
And infinite in power remains.
Hallelujah!

Above all heavens in glory raised,
Forever by all angels praised,
All human beings rules our Lord,
All creatures must obey His word.
Hallelujah!

He rules and reigns at God's right hand,
And has all power at His command,
All things are subject to His rod —
The Son of man and Son of God.
Hallelujah!

We trust in Him, our Lord and God,
Who hath redeemed us by His blood;
He captive led captivity,
From bitter death to set us free.
Hallelujah!

Through Him we heirs of heaven are made;
O Brother, Christ, extend Thine aid,
That we may firmly trust in Thee,
And live through Thee eternally.
Hallelujah!

4. "FROM THENCE HE SHALL COME TO JUDGE THE QUICK AND THE DEAD."

One day Christ will *come again*. Descending from heaven He will come. Visibly, so that all men will see Him, He will come. He will come in the glory of His Father with all His holy angels.

Thus says Holy Scripture, the Word of God.

When at the Lord's ascension the Apostles looked steadfastly toward heaven, two men stood by them in white apparel — they were angels — "which also said: Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven," Acts 1, 11. "Every eye shall see Him," Rev. 1, 7. "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven," 1 Thess. 4, 16. "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory," Matt. 24, 30. "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels," Matt. 16, 27.

When the Lord Jesus thus comes again, all the dead will rise, as I shall explain to you later on, when we consider the Third Article of the Christian Creed.

And then the Lord Jesus will *judge* the quick and the dead.

Yes, there is going to be a judgment. Our conscience testifies to that. Holy Scripture also testifies to that. It says: "He (Jesus Christ) is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead," Acts 10, 42. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son," John 5, 22. "He (God) hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained" (Jesus Christ), Acts 17, 31.

And: "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ," Rom. 14, 10. "Before Him shall be gathered all nations," Matt. 25, 32. "The dead, small and great, stand before God," Rev. 20, 12. The holy angels, being the officers in the judgment, will bring all men before His judgment seat, Matt. 24, 31; 13, 41. Also the evil angels will be there, to receive the "everlasting chains in darkness," Jude 6.

And "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil," Eccl. 12, 14. "Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment," Matt. 12, 36. The Lord, when He comes, "will make manifest the counsels of the hearts," 1 Cor.

4, 5. Yes, "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. 5, 10. There will be no hiding there, no concealment of the facts, no disguising, no excusing. Nothing will have grown old and be forgotten. Our whole life, with all its deeds and words and thoughts, our whole being, will be set in full light, will be laid perfectly bare, before the flaming eyes of the Judge.

And, as we have already heard, *in righteousness* will He judge the world, in righteousness so perfect that all the world, heaven, earth, and hell, will have to say His judgment is just.

And we may know even now what the verdict will be. For He will judge us *according to His Word* which He spoke here on earth and by the mouth of His Prophets and Apostles, and which He has delivered to us in the Bible. He says: "The word that I have spoken, *the same shall judge him in the last day*" (who has despised Christ and His Word), John 12, 48. And St. Paul writes: "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ *according to my Gospel*," Rom. 2, 16. And here is the gist, the sum and substance of His Word, according to which all the world will be judged: "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel unto every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*," Mark 16, 15, 16. And here is another utterance of the same nature: "*He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God*," John 3, 18.

There you have it. "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved," John 3, 17. If, by the grace of God, you believe in the Son of God, your Savior, and bear witness of your faith by love for Him and by deeds of love — however feeble — you will *not* be condemned; for if you believe, you have *forgiveness* of your sins through Him. But he that rejects the Savior is condemned, and will one day be condemned publicly, according to the rigid Law which he has a thousand times transgressed.

Thus, and thus alone, will it be on the day of judgment. — *And when will this day come?*

At the end of the world. The Day of Judgment will be the *last* day of this present world. St. Peter writes: "The day of the

Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up," 2 Pet. 3, 10. On the day of Christ's second coming and of judgment the world will pass away, and that by fire. That will be the *last day*.

And when will this last day come?

That is a thing which no man knows. The Lord Jesus says: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only," Matt. 24, 36. And He says: "As a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth," Luke 21, 35. And St. Peter writes: "The day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night," 2 Pet. 3, 10.

Judgment Day may come any moment. For all things are accomplished which, according to the Bible, should be accomplished and done before its coming. John writes: "Little children, it is the last time," 1 John 2, 18. Peter writes: "The end of all things is at hand," 1 Pet. 4, 7. James: "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. . . . Behold, the Judge standeth before the door," James 5, 8, 9. St. Paul speaks of the Christians of New Testament times as of people "upon whom the ends of the world are come," 1 Cor. 10, 11.

Be ready, therefore, every day! Be ready! Be Christ's, be Christ's own! Then you need not fear the last day, the Day of Judgment, but you may look forward to it with joy. Say believingly: "To this end Christ redeemed me, to this end He humbled Himself unto death and was exalted again, *'that I might be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.'*"

Soon will the Lord, my Life, appear;
Soon shall I end my trials here;
Leave sin and sorrow, death and pain:
To live is Christ, to die is gain.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of the Holy Ghost and of Sanctification.

The THIRD ARTICLE of the Holy Christian Creed treats of the *Holy Ghost* and of *Sanctification*, and reads thus:

"I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen."

And the explanation which Dr. Luther has given in his Small Catechism reads thus:

"I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith: in which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers, and will at the last day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true."

This article treats of five points: 1. of the Holy Ghost; 2. of the Church; 3. of the Forgiveness of Sins; 4. of the Resurrection of the Body; 5. of the Life Everlasting.

In the present chapter I shall tell you the most necessary things *about the Holy Ghost* and about His work, the work of *Sanctification*.

Who is the Holy Ghost?

You know that. The Holy Ghost is the Third Person in the Holy Trinity, true God with the Father and Son.

Therefore the Lord Jesus says: "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son *and of the Holy Ghost*," Matt. 28, 19. Therefore the Apostle says to believing Christians: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that (because) the *Spirit of God* dwelleth in you?" 1 Cor. 3, 16. Therefore the Apostle Peter, being filled with the Holy Ghost, said to the liar and hypocrite Ananias: "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the *Holy Ghost*? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God," Acts 5, 3. 4. And therefore it says in the Christian Creed: "*I believe in the Holy Ghost*," just as I believe in the Father and in the Son.

And many other passages do we find in the Bible which show that the Holy Ghost is the true God.

And what does the Holy Ghost do for us?

He performs the work of *Sanctification* in us. Hence the Bible speaks of the “sanctification of the Spirit,” 2 Thess. 2, 13; 1 Pet. 1, 2.

What does that mean?

That means: The Holy Ghost makes us sinners holy.

You ask how the Holy Ghost makes us sinners holy? — He appropriates unto us the Lord Jesus Christ; He makes the Lord Jesus Christ become our own, with all His merit, with all His righteousness, with all His holiness, with all His power — and thus He makes us sinners become holy in the Lord Jesus Christ and through the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence Holy Scripture says: “Ye are washed, ye are *sanctified*, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and *by the Spirit of our God*,” 1 Cor. 6, 11.

But how, you ask, does the Holy Ghost make the Lord Jesus thus to become our own, all His merit, all His righteousness, all His holiness, all His power, to become our own and to be imputed and delivered unto us? I reply: The Holy Ghost makes us *BELIEVE* in the Lord Jesus Christ. Reflect a moment. The Lord Jesus Christ is given us of God with all His merit, all His righteousness, all His holiness, all His power. Now if we receive this Lord Jesus Christ, who is given us of God, if we trust in, and rely upon, Him, if, in a word, we *believe* in Him: why, then we have Him, then He is our own, then He belongs to us with all His merit, righteousness, holiness, power, then we are holy in Him and through Him.

In this manner the Holy Ghost makes us sinners holy: by making us *believe* in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore the Lord Jesus says that the Christians are “*sanctified by faith that is in me*,” Acts 26, 18.

But can we not of ourselves, by our own reason and strength, believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord, or come to Him? Must the Holy Ghost perform this work of sanctification in us?

Dr. Martin Luther, in the explanation of the Third Article, says thus: “I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.” Thus you and every

Christian should say. You should know and understand that you cannot by your own reason and strength believe in Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost, and He alone, makes you believe in Jesus Christ and come to Him, by the Gospel, and thus performs in you the work of sanctification.

And this thing you will know and understand if you will now let me explain the matter to you from Holy Scripture, from the Word of God. God, in His Word, speaks the truth. God's Word you must believe; God's Word you must suffer to be your knowledge and your understanding.

What, then, does God's Word say? Why can you not by your own reason and strength believe in Jesus Christ, your Lord, or come to Him? The Word of God says that by nature, before the Holy Ghost performs His work in you, you are *spiritually blind, dead, and God's enemy*. Thus you are by nature. And for this reason you certainly cannot by your own reason and strength believe in Jesus Christ, your Lord, or come to Him.

The Word of God says, in the first place: "*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*," 1 Cor. 2, 14. So the natural man, man as he is by nature, before the Holy Ghost performs His work in him, receives not, understands not, comprehends not, accepts not, the things of the Spirit of God, the things which God reveals, which proceed from the Spirit of God; least of all does he receive the things pertaining to Jesus Christ. On the contrary, these things are foolishness to the natural man, they are nonsense, they are madness to him. He cannot know them; with him it is impossible to know the Lord Jesus Christ and the salvation that is in Him. For these things are "*spiritually discerned*," they must be judged and weighed with a spiritual, divine understanding; the natural man, however, has no spiritual, divine understanding; all he has is a carnal, sinful, earthly, human understanding. He is spiritually *blind*. And thus no man can by his own reason and strength believe in Jesus Christ, his Lord, or come to Him.

The Word of God furthermore says: "*You were dead in trespasses and sins*," Eph. 2, 1. This little passage of Holy Writ entirely sets at naught all of man's own reason and strength in things divine. Being trespassers and sinners, we are *dead*, spiritually dead. How, then, can we by our own reason and strength

believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord, or come to Him? We can no more by our own reason and strength believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord, or come to Him than it was possible for dead Lazarus to return to life and come forth from the grave by his own reason and strength.

The Word of God furthermore says: "*The carnal mind is enmity against God,*" Rom. 8, 7. By nature we all are carnally minded, sinfully minded, are we not? Now, God says that the carnal mind is enmity against God. So, by nature, we all are God's enemies, we hate God. For God is holy and hates sin; but we are unholy and are lovers of sin. A greater contrast, greater opposites there cannot be. So we are enemies of God and hate God with all our reason and all our strength. How, then, should we be able by this our own reason and strength to believe in the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, or come to Him? Such a thing were impossible. No, we hate Him by nature.

Hence the Word of God says: "*No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost,*" 1 Cor. 12, 3. No man can believe in Jesus Christ and believably call Him his Lord and Savior, save only and alone by the Holy Ghost. And the Lord Jesus Himself says: "*No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father,*" John 6, 65. If a man is to come to Christ, to embrace Him in true faith, it can be brought about only in this wise that it be given him of the Father, through the Holy Ghost, through the work and working of the Holy Ghost.

I hope, dear reader, that you are already a believer, that you already believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that you have already embraced Him in true faith. If so, you owe that entirely to the Holy Ghost; you did not aid in that work in the least.

For what has the Holy Ghost done to make you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, to lead you to Him, to sanctify you?

He has CALLED you by the Gospel.

The Gospel is the glad tidings of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Now this Gospel has been "reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel." And this book has told you about it. But properly speaking, it has been reported unto you by "the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," 1 Pet. 1, 12. For the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven brought the Gospel down from heaven and is always present with and in the Gospel. So, properly speaking, it is He who has reported, or proclaimed,

the Gospel unto you. And in *reporting* unto you the grace of God which is in Christ Jesus, He has also *called* you unto the grace of God in Christ Jesus. He has reported unto you the grace of God in Christ Jesus and has said and continues to say: "Come, for all things are now ready!" The Holy Ghost tells you that the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior and has redeemed you and reconciled you unto God and has opened unto you God's paternal (== fatherly) arms and His paternal heart and heaven and everlasting bliss; and He (the Holy Ghost) now bids you come, He now bids you believe, He now bids you trust and come rejoicing. — Thus has the Holy Ghost *called* you by the Gospel.

However, in thus calling you by the Gospel, the Holy Ghost has, *by this same Gospel, ENLIGHTENED you with His gifts.*

By the Gospel, by means of which He called you unto the grace of God in Christ Jesus, the Holy Ghost wrought upon you a miracle great and divine. To you, who were spiritually blind, He thereby gave light. To you, who were spiritually dead, He thereby gave life. To you, who were God's enemy, He thereby gave a heartfelt desire for God and for God's grace in Christ Jesus, which is proclaimed to you in the Gospel. In a word, the Holy Ghost, by the Gospel, gave you FAITH in Jesus Christ, so that you are come to your Savior, that you know Him as your dear Savior, that you trust and rely upon Him, that you rejoice and take comfort in Him. — Thus has the Holy Ghost, by the Gospel, *enlightened* you with His gifts.

The Bible says: "So, then, *faith* cometh by *hearing*, and hearing by the *Word of God*," Rom. 10, 17, that is, by the *Gospel*. And of a sinner's being called and enlightened, which comes to pass through the hearing of the Gospel, the Bible speaks thus: "Ye," it says to believing Christians, "are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him *who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*," 1 Pet. 2, 9. And Christians shall say: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, *hath shined in our hearts, to give the light* of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. 4, 6.

When a man has thus been called and enlightened: made a believer, by the Holy Ghost through the Gospel, he is CONVERTED and REGENERATED, or born again, as Scripture furthermore calls it. He is *converted*: he is turned about from the way that leads to

destruction, and is turned toward Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and by whom alone a man cometh to the Father. And such a man is *regenerated*, is born again: he is no longer as he was by nature: a child of unbelief and of the wrath of God; but he is now a child of faith, a child of grace, a child of God, an heir of eternal life. For this I say unto you as a word of God and in God's name: him that turns to the Lord Jesus Christ, that comes to Him, that knows Him as his dear Savior, that trusts and relies upon Him, that rejoices and takes comfort in Him,— though he do it ever so feebly, with much trembling and hesitation, yea, though tortured with doubt,— him the Savior receives, him the Father clasps to His bosom as His own dear child; he is born again, regenerated.

Of such conversion and regeneration the Holy Bible speaks thus: "Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now *returned* unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls," 1 Pet. 2, 25. "Being *born again*, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever," 1 Pet. 1, 23. "As many as received Him (Christ), to them gave He power" (the great privilege) "to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe* on His name: which *were born*, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but *of God*," John 1, 12, 13.

Behold, this thing the Holy Ghost has wrought upon you and in you by the Gospel, He alone; you with your own reason and strength did not aid in this thing in the least; neither, indeed, could you. In this manner, by thus calling and enlightening you, the Holy Ghost has made you a believer in Jesus Christ, your Savior, has brought you to Him, has converted you to Him, has regenerated you, so that you now are a child of God, received into grace, *sanctified* by the merit and the righteousness and the holiness of your Savior Jesus Christ (which things through faith have become your own) and furnished with His strength.

* * *

I repeat: In this manner you sinner have been *sanctified*, made holy. If you believe in Jesus Christ, your Savior, Christ your Savior's merit and righteousness and holiness belongs to you, and in the sight of God it covers up all your sin and unrighteousness and unholiness. In looking upon you, God no longer sees your sins upon you and in you; all He sees upon you and in you

is the holiness of your Savior, and for His sake He regards you as perfectly holy.

But the Holy Ghost sanctifies you, makes you holy, in another, in a *more special* sense. Of this *special* sanctification Dr. Luther speaks in his Catechism when he says that the Holy Ghost has, by the Gospel, “**SANCTIFIED**” you “**IN THE TRUE FAITH.**”

What does that mean?

It means that, having made you a believer, and having thus appropriated unto you the holiness of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost furthermore makes you *pious and godly*.

Do you understand that?

Behold, when the Holy Ghost, by the Gospel, kindled in your heart faith in your Savior Jesus Christ, He thereby also changed your poor sinful heart. He renewed your heart, so that now you no longer love sin, but you love God and God’s will and commandments. Your will no longer is to serve sin, which, indeed, still clings to you and besets you, but your will is to serve God, who has so very graciously received you. The Holy Ghost, in making you a believer, created in you a heartfelt desire to keep God’s commandment, to lead a godly life, to do good works. And not only the *desire* so to do did the Holy Ghost give you when He made you a believer in Christ, He also gave you the *power*. When the Holy Ghost, by the Gospel, brought you to Christ and made you believe in Him, also your Savior’s *strength* became your own, as I have repeatedly said. And thus you now have strength to struggle against and overcome the Devil, the world, and the flesh, and to walk in godliness and good works. This your Savior’s strength continually flows and pours into you through the Gospel and through the Holy Ghost, who is always present in the Gospel and works in you through the Gospel.

Of this *special* sanctification, of this sanctification in the life and conversation of believers, the Holy Bible speaks when it says: “**This is the will of God, even your sanctification,**” 1 Thess. 4, 3.

Yes, God wills that His dear Christians and children, whom He has received into grace, shall live and walk in righteousness and godliness. Hereunto He created and ordained them when by His Holy Spirit He made them believers. Wherefore the Bible teaches Christians and children of God to say thus: “**We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them,**” Eph. 2, 10.

And the Apostle admonishes us by the Holy Spirit: "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: . . . giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue," 2 Pet. 1, 3. 5. And again the Bible teaches Christians and children of God to say: "I delight in the Law of God after the inward man," Rom. 7, 22.

This special sanctification in the life and conversation is the *mark* by which you may know all true Christians and children of God. It is their spiritual trade-mark, so to speak. Every true Christian is just and godly. He that will not be just and godly is not a true Christian, is not a child of God, is not a believer in Jesus Christ, he has not come to Jesus Christ in true faith. You see into that, no doubt.

But you must know, furthermore, that this special sanctification *never reaches perfection* in this present life. As long as you live "evil is present" with you. There will always be within you a constant war and struggle between the old man and the new man. You will never be able to be and to live as you would like. Again and again the sin that is in you will break out in desire, and thought, and word, and deed. But again and again you will quell and conquer sin in the power of Christ, which is given you by the Holy Ghost, who by the Gospel dwells in you and works in you. You follow your Savior, indeed; but you follow Him as one that is weak and sick and weary, often stumbling and falling. But again and again you grow strong and hale and hearty, and rise up and take steps that falter not, and follow Him. And hearken! *Again and again the holiness of your Savior, which is given and imputed to you, supplies what you lack in holiness of your own.* Thus again and again you are the victor until — you reach eternal life. There you will be perfect. The Apostle writes: "I delight in the Law of God after the inward man." This you have already heard. Then he continues: "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord!" Rom. 7, 22—25. There you have in very few and simple words a Christian's life of sanctification. Warfare and wretchedness lie in its path, but so do victory and comfort from on high.

A Christian's life of sanctification consists in this — to express myself briefly and in language that all can understand — that a Christian *does good works*. The Bible very frequently expresses the matter thus. Remember the passage you just heard: "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *good works*, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," Eph. 2, 10. Hence, for the sake of greater clearness, I would like, before passing on, to explain briefly and clearly what, in the sight of God, is a good work.

I ask, then: *What, in the sight of God, is a GOOD WORK?*

The following is a good answer: *A good work in the sight of God is whatever a child of God does, speaks, or thinks, by faith, according to the Ten Commandments, for the glory of God and for the benefit of his neighbor.*

I will explain this answer briefly.

Only he can do a good work in the sight of God who, through faith in Jesus Christ, is reconciled unto God and is *God's dear child*, only he who is *in the faith*. All the so-called good works that are done by unbelievers and godless people may, in outward appearance and in the sight of men, seem good, but they are not good in the sight of God. In these works the heart is wanting: the childlike love of God, the childlike desire to obey God and to please God. How should the works of these people be good in the sight of God who will have nothing to do with God, who will not accept the Savior whom God has sent, who reject God's offer of reconciliation? How should God be pleased with the works, the dead works, of His enemies? Yes, *dead* works, such are even the best works that unbelievers do. For they are not born out of the life that is of God and in God; they have not in themselves the life that is of God and in God; they are nothing more than the works of blind, dead, and God-hating men, works in which God's holy eyes see sin upon sin: dead works. Unbelievers, who have not become God's children through faith in Jesus Christ, are utterly void of power to do good works in the sight of God. Good works in the sight of God can be done only and solely by believers and children of God. For even though the works of these people are imperfect and tainted with sin, yet God sees that they are the first-fruits of the new life which He has created, that they are born out of budding and growing love for Him, that they are wrought by His Holy Spirit, in a word, that they are done by His

children, whom He loves with tender love. Herein God is like a mother who is filled with delight even at the first toddling steps of her darling child. Of a truth, only that is a good work in the sight of God which a child of God does by faith, by faith in Jesus Christ. Hence the Lord Jesus says to them that are His: "I am the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing," John 15, 5.

And good works in the sight of God are those works which are done *according to the Ten Commandments*. In the Ten Commandments God has told us what He requires of us, what manner of works we are to do. By these commandments children of God should be governed. If they suffer themselves to be governed by these commandments, they will all their lifetime have more to do than they can accomplish. We must not lose sight of the Ten Commandments. We must not think out works of our own which we would do. We must not suffer men to tell us what manner of works we must do. *God* has told us what we are to do and what we are not to do. In the Ten Commandments He has told us. These we should make our rule. If we fail to do this, the Word of God will apply to us: "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," Matt. 15, 9. Certainly we should do what *God* says, what *God* would have us do.

And good works in the sight of God are those works which are done *for the glory of God*. Our works must not be done for our own glory. That in our works which is of us is all sin. Whatever in our works is good, is of God, who, by His Holy Spirit, works it in us. Hence, in all our works we must give glory to God. And we must do all our works for this purpose and to this end, that God, our merciful Father, may be glorified thereby. Our works must tend to the glory of God, so that other people, when they see our good works, may praise God and say: "Behold, such are the works that are done by Christians and children of God. Let us also seek this God that we may know Him." Therefore the Word of God says to Christians: "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," 1 Cor. 10, 31.

And good works in the sight of God are those works which are done *for the benefit of one's neighbor*. This is God's commandment that we love one another. Everybody shall love his neighbor as himself. And in such love we are to serve one another,

help one another, benefit one another, for time and eternity. God has given every one of His children gifts and graces with which he can help, benefit, serve others. These gifts and graces we are to employ in heartfelt love in the service of our neighbor. So doing, we shall do good works. God, in His Word, says to His children: "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God," 1 Pet. 4, 10.

Lastly, a good work in the sight of God is *whatever* a child of God — by faith, according to the Ten Commandments, for the glory of God and the benefit of his neighbor — *does, speaks, or thinks*. If, as a child of God, you would do good works, you need not think that you must do works that appear great and extraordinary. Nay. *Everything* is a good work — everything that you do by faith, according to the Ten Commandments, for the glory of God and the benefit of your neighbor, even the most ordinary works of everyday life. If the father and head of a household in this manner provides for his own by his daily labor, and in this manner serves his employer — that is a good work in the sight of God. If the mother and mistress of a household in this manner attends to her household duties — that is a good work in the sight of God. Yea, every little deed, every little word, nay, every thought, of a believer and child of God is a good work in the sight of God, if it be done according to the Ten Commandments, and for the glory of God and for the benefit of his neighbor.

Now you know what is a good work. So, if you are a child of God, be zealous of good works, unto which the Holy Ghost draws you by the Gospel and gives you strength.

* * *

And do you know what the Holy Ghost has finally wrought in you by the Gospel?

He has, by the Gospel, *KEPT YOU in the true faith.*

You, by your own reason and strength, could not for a single moment have continued in the true faith. If the Holy Spirit had not kept you in the true faith by the Gospel, you would immediately have again become blind and dead and an enemy of God, in a word: an unbeliever. Not for a moment could you, by your own reason and strength, have stood your ground against the temptations of the Devil, the world, and the flesh, that is, of your sinful nature. That you have been kept in the true faith is one

of the miracles of divine grace which the Holy Spirit has wrought in you by the Gospel. Thank Him for such grace!

And the Holy Ghost is willing, by the Gospel, to keep you furthermore in the true faith, even unto the end, that you may be saved. God, in His Word, says to us Christians: "Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," 1 Pet. 1, 5. And the Apostle Paul writes thus by inspiration of the Holy Ghost: "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you *will perform it* until the day of Jesus Christ," Phil. 1, 6. These are sure promises of God, which you can depend upon.

Continue in the Gospel! Use, hear, read, learn, study, the Gospel! In the Gospel the Holy Spirit makes His abode. By the Gospel the Holy Spirit works at your heart. By the Gospel the Holy Spirit is poured into your heart like a heavenly oil, and feeds the fire of faith which He has kindled in your heart, and makes it mightier, and makes it consume all things that seek to extinguish it, makes it burn brighter and brighter and give an ever stronger light of good works. Or I will say thus: By nature your heart is cold and dark, like iron. But as iron is made warm and glowing when cast into the fire, so your heart is made warm and glowing in the faith by the Gospel, in which the Holy Spirit dwells and in which He works upon you and in you. But as iron grows cold and dark again when taken out of the fire, so your heart likewise will soon grow cold and dark again, in unbelief and sin, if you do not continue in the Gospel. But if you continue in the Gospel, your heart will continue warm and glowing, and will wax warmer and warmer and will glow brighter and brighter, and steadily increase in strength and might and power and firmness, and will be impregnable through faith, so that no one and nothing will be able to extinguish and darken and weaken and destroy it. Do, therefore, continue in the Gospel! The Gospel "is the power of God unto salvation," Rom. 1, 16. By the Gospel the Holy Ghost will surely keep you in the faith unto salvation. Continue in the Gospel!

* * *

All this work which you have now heard about: that the Holy Ghost has called you by the Gospel, enlightened you with His gifts, sanctified and kept you in the true faith — has the Holy Ghost wrought all this in *you only*?

God forbid! He has done this in you "even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies *the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.*" Thus says Dr. Luther in the Catechism. Need I add anything on that score? I surely need not. There surely can be no doubt about that. There surely are other Christians on earth besides you. You are not the only one. But all Christians on earth are indebted for what they are, and for the fact that they abide in Christ, to the Holy Ghost, and to Him alone, who has called *them* by the Gospel even as He has *you*, and enlightened them with His gifts, and sanctified and kept them in the true faith.

But still — here a question arises.

Do not a great many people hear the Gospel and still fail to become believers? What of them? Is the Holy Ghost not willing to perform the holy work of sanctification, of which we have now been speaking, — is the Holy Ghost not willing to perform this work in every person that hears the Gospel?

Yes, indeed, *the Holy Ghost is willing to perform in every person, by the Gospel, that work* which He has wrought in you and in the whole Christian Church on earth. It is His will to call by the Gospel, enlighten with His gifts, sanctify and keep with Jesus Christ in the one true faith, and thus finally lead to salvation, every human being. *But most men obstinately resist the Word and Spirit of God, and thus it is solely their own fault that they are not made believers and saved, but are lost.*

Look here! I will show you some sure and plain words of God by which you may know that the Holy Ghost is willing, by the Gospel, to make all men believers and save them. "As I live, saith the Lord God, *I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked*, but that the wicked turn from his way and live," Ezek. 33, 11. "God will have *all men to be saved*, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. 2, 4. "The Lord is not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance," 2 Pet. 3, 9. By repentance is meant that a man acknowledge his sins and be sorry for them and believe in the Savior Jesus Christ and take comfort in Him. "God so loved the *world* that He gave His only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3, 16. By these passages you surely see that the Holy Ghost is willing to make every human being a believer, and save him, by the Gospel.

But the Word of God says furthermore: “Many are called, *but few are chosen*,” Matt. 22, 14. That is to say: Although the Holy Ghost, by the Gospel, calls many people, yet but few really become believers and are saved, and are therefore God’s chosen children and heirs of eternal life.

And now I will show you some sure and plain words of God by which you may know that it is man’s own fault if he does not believe and gain salvation, but is lost. The Lord Jesus says to the city of Jerusalem, which was being called incessantly, and yet, with respect to the great majority of its inhabitants, was unbelieving: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, *and ye would not*,” Matt. 23, 37. And to the Jewish council, which persecuted and killed the preachers and witnesses of the Lord Jesus, it was said: “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, *ye do always resist the Holy Ghost*; as your fathers did, so do ye,” Acts 7, 51.

In a word, it is as the Prophet Hosea says: “*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help*,” Hos. 13, 9. That means: Whosoever is destroyed, destroys himself, by his own fault; God would give us nothing but help, and help is to be had of God alone. —

Dear reader: The Holy Ghost is now busily working at you to save you through faith in Jesus Christ. O my child, my child, hinder not this work, but be as good ground, where the seed springs up and bears much fruit! God grant you His grace to this end!

O Holy Ghost, eternal God,
Best Comfort for life’s rugged road,
With all my heart I pray to Thee;
Hear my entreaty graciously.

O Lord, be Thou my Comforter,
Lest in my sins I might despair;
Protect me from the snares of hell,
Grant that in Jesus Christ I dwell.

That always I may ready be
To serve this Master faithfully,
And own Him in true living faith
My Lord and Savior unto death.

O lead me in the narrow way,
And from the fold let me not stray;
That when this mortal frame I leave,
The crown of life I may receive.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the Church.

The second point of the Third Article of the holy Christian Creed treats of the *Church*.

And it reads thus: "*I believe in the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints.*"

The word *church* is sometimes used to denote a house or building in which divine services are held. But the proper meaning of church is *congregation* (= gathering) or *communion*. I beg you to remember that.

Now, what manner of church, or congregation, or communion, is meant when it says in the Third Article: "I believe in the holy Christian Church"?

The Third Article itself tells us what it means. It says: "I believe in the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints." The Third Article means *the communion of saints*.

"The communion of saints" — what manner of communion, or congregation, or church, is that?

"The communion of saints" is the communion, or congregation, or church, of all those whom the Holy Ghost has, by the Gospel, made believers in Jesus Christ, and who, by faith in Jesus Christ, are sanctified, as you learned in the foregoing chapter. Or let me say the same thing in other words: The "communion of saints" is *the whole Christian Church on earth*, whom the Holy Ghost, by the Gospel, calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies, and keeps with Jesus Christ in the one true faith, as Dr. Luther explains in his explanation of the Third Article.

If, then, by "church" the Third Article of the holy Christian Creed means the "communion of saints," as the Article itself says, the Third Article herewith declares that *only* such belong to the Church as *believe in Jesus Christ*; for only they who believe in Jesus Christ are saints, or sanctified. But the Third Article likewise declares herewith that *all* those belong to the Church who believe in Jesus Christ; for all they who believe in Jesus Christ are saints, or sanctified.

In a word, by "church" the Third Article of the Holy Christian Creed means the congregation, the communion, the *whole number of all believers on earth*.

And herein the Third Article is right.

The Bible, also, means, by "church," the whole number of all believers on earth.

Eph. 1, 22. 23 it says: "And (God) gave Him (Christ) to be the head over all things to the Church, *which is His body*, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

I wish to help you thoroughly to understand this passage.

God gave Christ to be "*over all things*," above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and has put all things under His feet. Thus the Apostle says in the words just before our present text. That is the same thing that Jesus says, Himself, with the words: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth," Matt. 28, 18.

But Christ, whom God gave to be over all things, Him God specially "*gave to be the head . . . to the Church*." The Church must, therefore, be something that specially belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ; the Church must be a congregation of people that have the great Lord of all the world for their special head. — Here, already, you can perceive that the Church is the congregation, the whole number, of *believers*. For only believers and, indeed, all believers are those persons who thus have Christ for their head.

However, the Apostle says expressly what the Church is. He says: "*Which is His body*." The Church is the *body* of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His spiritual body. The Church is a congregation of people which is as closely united with Christ as the members of a body are with the head. Here you see with perfect clearness that the Church is the congregation, the whole number, of *believers*. For only believers and, indeed, all believers are so closely and intimately connected with Christ, as the body is with the head.

Finally, the Apostle explains how the Church is the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. He says: (The Church is) "the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." That is, Christ, who fills all things in heaven and on earth with His divine omnipresence and power, especially fills the Church — wherewith? With His grace, with His Spirit, with His merit, with His righteousness, with all the salvation He has achieved for it, with His life, with His mind, with His will. As the head imparts all life and motion to the body, so does Christ to His Church. How could you perceive more clearly that the Church is the congregation, or the whole number,

of *believers*? For only believers and all believers are thus filled with Christ, are thus “the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.”

I will show you another passage from which you can see that the Church is the whole number of all believers on earth.

Eph. 2, 19—22 it says thus: “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.”

This passage, too, I would help you to thoroughly understand. That will be beneficial in a twofold way. In the first place, you will thus be the more firmly convinced that the Church is the whole number of believers on earth. In the second place, you will have a guide to a proper study and understanding of the precious language of the Bible.

The Apostle writes what is said in this passage to the Christians in the city of Ephesus, in Asia Minor.

To these he writes that *now they are no more strangers and foreigners* — where? In the kingdom of God; but now they are *citizens* there, they are *of the household of God*. And such they are “*with the saints*,” that is, even as all the saints, even as all that are sanctified by faith in Jesus Christ.

And whence had the Christians of Ephesus, even as all the saints, this blessed privilege that they were citizens in the kingdom of God and of the household of God? They were “built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone” — even as all the saints. What does that mean, “built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone”? That means, the Holy Ghost had, by the Gospel, made them believe in the Gospel, which was proclaimed by the Apostles and Prophets; and the Gospel was now the sure foundation, upon which they were founded; and in the Gospel they had the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who, as you know, is the very pith and marrow of the Gospel; — through faith in the Gospel they had Him with all His salvation which He achieved for them and for all the world, and thus, in reality, they were founded, by faith, upon the sole corner stone, Jesus Christ. And thence they had this blessedness that they, even as all the

saints, were citizens in the kingdom of God and members of God's household. For whosoever is founded by faith upon the Savior Jesus Christ is no stranger and foreigner in the kingdom of God, but a qualified citizen and a member of God's household; yea, he is God's dearly beloved child.

From this you can see that the church, or congregation, at Ephesus, to whom the Apostle wrote the above words, was looked upon by him, and addressed, as a church, or congregation, of *believers*. For only believers are no more strangers and foreigners, but citizens with the saints and of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone.

But now the Apostle turns his eyes upon the whole Christian Church on earth, upon the Christian Church or congregation of all places and of all ages, and says: "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord." He would say: On Christ, as the sole corner stone, not only you Christians at Ephesus are founded by faith, but "all the building," that is, the whole Christian Church on earth, the Christian Church or congregation of all ages and places, is founded on Christ and grows in Him, as a building fitly framed together, unto a holy temple in the Lord, in which the Lord dwells and is worshiped.

From this you surely see with certainty that the whole Christian Church on earth, the whole Christian Church, or the congregation of all ages and places, is, according to Bible doctrine, nothing more nor less than the whole number of all *believers*. For only believers, but all believers, are the building, all the building, which, founded upon Christ, and, fitly framed together in Him, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. Or do you think that an unbeliever, a godless person, a hypocrite, can belong to this building? Or do you think that any believer does not belong to this building, he having been forgotten or overlooked by God? Dear child, harbor no such thought. For, in the first place, it is written: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His," Rom. 8, 9. That is, whomsoever the Holy Ghost has not, by the Gospel, made a believer in Christ, he does not belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, he does not belong to the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, he does not belong to the Church and congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ, he does not belong to the building which is founded upon Christ, he does not belong to the holy temple in the

Lord. And again it is written: "The Lord knoweth them that are His," 2 Tim. 2, 19. That is, the Lord Jesus Christ knows all them that believe in Him and through faith belong to Him, full well, and He acknowledges and receives them as His own. Thus every one of them that are His belongs to Him, belongs to His body, belongs to His Church or congregation, belongs to the building founded upon Him, belongs to the holy temple in the Lord. The Lord forgets none, overlooks none, of them that are His; every one of them He adds to His Church, gives him a place in His building and temple.— Thus *only* believers and *all* believers belong to the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. *The Church is the whole number of all believers on earth.*

Finally the Apostle turns again to the Christians at Ephesus and says: "In whom (Christ) ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." With these words the Apostle once more and expressly says to the believing Ephesians, for their joy and comfort, that they, too, belong to "all the building," to the holy temple in the Lord, in which God will dwell in all His grace through His Holy Spirit, who is the Maker and Preserver of faith, that hence they, too, belong to the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the whole number of all believers on earth.

Yes, the Church is "the communion of saints," the congregation of them that are sanctified by faith which is in Christ, the whole number of all believers on earth.

Wherefore also the Third Article of the holy Christian Creed says: "I believe in the holy Christian Church."

It says: "I *believe* in the holy Christian Church."

Why does it say: "I *believe*"?

For two reasons.

First, because the Church is *invisible*.

But how is the Church invisible? Do not men belong to the Church, men who have flesh and bones and who can, therefore, be seen? Indeed. But only men *who believe* belong to the Church. And no man can look into another's heart and see if he really believe. Only "*the Lord knoweth them that are His*," 2 Tim. 2, 19. And the Lord Jesus says: "The kingdom of God" (the Church) "cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is *within you*"— alone by faith, which dwells within, in the heart, and which none

but the Lord can positively know, do ye belong to the kingdom of God, to the Church, Luke 17, 20, 21. Thus the Church is indeed invisible; men cannot see and know for certain who belongs to the Church. And thus we are compelled to say: "I *believe* in the holy Christian Church."

Yes, we should say: "I *believe* in the holy Christian Church." For, in the second place — that the Holy Ghost does, by the Gospel, at all times gather and preserve a Church, a congregation of believers, who are sanctified by faith, of *this* we are assured by Scripture. There is always a church on earth. There is always a band of believers. The Lord Jesus says: "Upon this rock" (He means Himself) "I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," Matt. 16, 18. Even though hell open its gates and send forth all its hosts to destroy the Church, yet shall it not prevail. The Holy Ghost will evermore, as I have said, gather and preserve, by the Gospel, a congregation of believers. God says: "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" — that is, it shall gather and preserve a church, a congregation of believers, Is. 55, 10, 11. And hence we should always say joyfully and confidently: "I *believe* in the holy Christian Church."

"I *believe* in *the*" (in *one*) "holy Christian Church," we should say. For all believers in all the world are, as you know, the one spiritual body of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only Head of this His body, that is, of His Church. It says in the Scriptures: "There is *one* body, and *one* spirit, even as ye are called in *one* hope of your calling; *one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all," Eph. 4, 4—6. Hence there is, in truth and in the sight of God, but one holy Christian Church. By the one true faith, which is in the heart, all believers on earth are united with Christ, the Head, and are also united with one another, as the members of *one* body. I therefore repeat: There is in truth only *one* Church.

"I *believe* in the *holy* Christian Church," we say in the Creed. This does not require much explaining. The foregoing chapter

and the beginning of the present one enable you to understand this. The Church is called holy because it is the communion of *saints* (holy people). All the members of the Church are *sanctified* by faith in Christ. All the members of the Church have by faith accepted the great gift of God's grace: the Lord Jesus Christ with all His righteousness and holiness, with all His merit and salvation. And thus the righteousness and holiness, and the merit and salvation, of the Lord Jesus Christ is their own. God imputes to believers the righteousness and holiness and the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ as if it were their own, and He appropriates unto them the salvation which Christ has achieved. And thus through faith in Christ they are sanctified, they are saints. And since all the members of the Church are believers, all the members of the Church are sanctified through faith, and are saints. And thus the Church is "holy," a holy congregation. The Bible says: "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word" (baptism), "that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish," Eph. 5, 25—27. And this Church, which is thus sanctified by faith in Christ, also serves God with holy works; all the members of the Church, all believers, do that, as you likewise learned in the foregoing chapter. They sanctify themselves, they "offer up spiritual sacrifices," they do the works of childlike obedience. And also for this reason the Church is called "holy." The Bible says: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. 2, 5.—Yes, "I believe in the *holy* Christian Church."

And "I believe in a *holy Christian* Church." The Church is built on *Christ*, as its sole foundation; therefore it is called "Christian." The Bible says: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. 3, 11. And: "In whom (Christ) all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord," Eph. 2, 21.

Now you understand the words: "I believe in the *holy Christian* Church, the communion of *saints*."

And now, my dear reader, you wish to be in touch with this one holy Christian Church, which is the communion of saints, and have close communion with her — do you not? You already belong to her, you know; you are already one of her members through faith in your Savior Jesus Christ. And now you have a desire to be where your brothers and sisters are in the faith, at least you desire to be where some of them are, and to use, together with them and in communion with them, the holy, faith-giving, and saving Word of God, and to praise and give glory to God, and to serve Him, and, finally, await the hour in which you shall depart this world and be translated into the Kingdom of Glory. — I hope these words express the sentiments of your own heart.

I therefore now ask this question: *Where is this one holy Christian Church, which is the communion of saints, to be found?*

And I make this reply: This one holy Christian Church, which is the communion of saints, is to be found *wherever the Gospel of the Savior Jesus Christ is in use*, that is, wherever it is used, wherever it is preached, taught, heard, learned, received, and confessed. For wherever the Gospel is thus in use, it does not fail to bear some fruit; on the contrary, men thereby are called, gathered, enlightened, sanctified, and kept with Jesus Christ in the one true faith — in every such place is the one holy Christian Church, the communion of saints. Do not misunderstand me. The one holy Christian Church, which is the communion of saints, is scattered over all the earth; but wherever the Gospel is in use, in every such place there most surely is a portion of the Church, in every such place there certainly are at least some who believe and are sanctified by faith; for the Gospel never fails to bear fruit wherever it is used, but always begets faith in some, and keeps them therein. To prove this statement, I refer to the word and promise of God which you just met with, in this chapter. God says thus: “As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it,” Is. 55, 10. 11.

Hence if you wish to be in touch with the one holy Christian Church, which is the communion of saints, and to be where your

brethren and sisters are in the faith, then adhere to a company of people among whom the Gospel is in use and who profess the Christian faith. There are sure to be some people there who believe and are sanctified by faith; there you will find the one holy Christian Church, which is the communion of saints. — I believe you understand that.

And a company of such people — people among whom the Gospel is in use and who profess the Christian faith — such a company you can find. For such a company is not invisible but visible.

Remember: The company of those among whom the Gospel is in use and who profess the Christian faith is called *the visible Church*.

“Visible” this company is called because it can be seen.

And “Church” this company is called because the Church, the true Church, the one holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, is found therein, in this company.

Understand me: In the *visible* Church is sure to be the *invisible* Church, the true Church, the congregation of believers, the one holy Christian Church, the communion of saints. Why? Because in the visible Church the Gospel is in use, and the Gospel never fails to bear fruit.

But in the visible Church, beside the true Christians and saints, *there are also false Christians and saints, Christians and saints falsely so called, hypocrites and ungodly people*. In the visible Church there are many who merely participate in the use of the Gospel without experiencing the power of God which is in the Gospel; in the visible Church many join in professing the Christian faith without really having this faith in their hearts.

To sum up what has been said: *What is the visible Church? — The visible Church is the whole number of those who profess the Christian faith and are gathered about God’s Word, but among whom, beside the true Christians, there are also hypocrites.*

Also the Bible, the Word of God, calls every such company of people as professes the Christian faith and is gathered about God’s Word — the Bible calls every such company “church.” It does that each and every time it speaks of such a company. Although God knows better than we do that in every such company there are also hypocrites and ungodly people, yet He adorns and honors the whole company with the high and noble name of “church,”

and bestows upon it all the honors and privileges which none but true Christians and children of God are entitled to. Why does God do that? Because in every such company the true Church, a congregation of believers, is contained and lies hidden. These alone God considers; the hypocrites and ungodly He takes in the bargain, as it were; and He will manage to do away with them if they refuse to repent. — God does in such a case just as a gold-seeker does. When a goldseeker finds a piece of quartz,¹⁾ he cries: "Gold! Gold!" And he takes up the quartz rejoicing, because he knows there is gold in it. But at length he purifies the gold of the quartz and throws the quartz away. Even so in the Bible the companies of those who profess the Christian faith and are gathered about God's Word are everywhere called "churches," despite the fact that in every such company there were also hypocrites and ungodly people, and oftentimes not a few. Out of a hundred instances take but one. St. Paul begins his First Epistle to the Corinthians thus: "Paul . . . unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus. . . . Grace be unto you!" 1 Cor. 1, 1—3.

That there are hypocrites and ungodly people among those who profess the Christian faith and are gathered about God's Word, this the Bible teaches expressly and most emphatically. Hence you must not marvel at it nor be offended thereat. Among the twelve Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ was Judas, the traitor. And the Lord Jesus says: "The kingdom of heaven" (the Church) "is likened" (is similar in outward appearance) "unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also." This parable the Lord Jesus explains as follows: "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man" (the Lord Jesus); "the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom" (the true believers); "but the tares are the children of the wicked one" (the hypocrites and ungodly). "The enemy that sowed them is the Devil," Matt. 13, 24—26. 37—39. "Again," the Lord Jesus says, "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down

1) Quartz is the worthless substance in which the gold is concealed.

and gathered the good (fish) into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth," Matt. 13, 47—50. And in many other places in the Bible you may find this selfsame doctrine.

However, in spite of the fact that among the company, and among the various companies, of those who profess the Christian faith and are gathered about God's Word there are also hypocrites and ungodly people, you still should adhere to such a company; for there is where you find the true Church, the true believers and children of God, with whom you desire communion and whom you desire to be with. Furthermore, like all the children of God, you both should and would habitually hear the preaching of God's Word; and the preaching of God's Word you will meet with in such a company or church. Lastly, you both should and would openly confess your faith in your Savior. For the Lord Jesus says: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven," Matt. 10, 32. 33. Now, would it not be a denial of your faith in your Savior, if you were to stand aloof from those who profess the Christian faith? if you were to be ashamed of their company?

* * *

But now the question arises: To which church, to which of these companies of men who profess the Christian faith and are gathered about God's Word, ought you to belong?

For, my dear reader, I can not and dare not keep you in ignorance of the fact that in the Church, in the visible Church, sad to say, things are not as they ought to be.

Not only are there hypocrites and ungodly people in every visible Church, as I have already shown. And oftentimes these hypocrites and ungodly people even enjoy great distinction, and wield great power and influence, and hold offices and posts of honor in the Church. This is very sad. But not only that. In many, yea, in most visible churches we find a *falsified* confession of the Christian doctrine; and the Word of God about which people are gathered in such churches is not preached in its truth and purity,

as it is found in the Bible, but it is *falsified*. In some churches the Word of God is very badly, yea, horribly falsified. In some it is not so badly falsified, but still it is falsified. All these churches in which a falsified confession of the Christian faith is found and in which the Word of God is not preached in its truth and purity but is falsified, all these churches are called *heterodox churches*, churches that have false doctrines concerning the Christian faith.

My dear child, marvel not that there are so many heterodox churches, much less let this shake your faith. Behold, the Devil cannot bear the Word of God, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. And for this reason he seeks to falsify it. And he succeeds in doing so. He sends false teachers, false preachers, false prophets, into the Christian churches, and they falsify the Word of God. These false teachers and preachers and prophets often have a saintly appearance and pose as servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, but in reality they are servants of Satan and like unto counterfeiters. They are wolves in sheep's clothing. Yea, so great is the Devil's cunning and power, that teachers who really are believing Christians, yet, in ignorance and blindness, preach false doctrine. And in this manner the Christian churches are spoiled. The people adhere to false teachers and false teachings. The churches are heterodox. I repeat: Marvel not at this and let it not shake your faith. If you consider the thing aright, you will have to admit that it is quite natural for things to be thus. The Devil could not be what he is: the enemy of God and mankind, and he could not have any power on earth, if things were otherwise.

However, there is at the present time also an *orthodox church* on earth. The orthodox church is that visible church, that company of men, or, let me say: the whole number of those who have, teach, and confess the Word of God in its truth and purity throughout. This orthodox church is always small: but it is the *true* visible church; for it is governed in its doctrine, faith, and confession by the Word of God and by the Word of God alone. Thus God would have it. For the Lord Jesus said to His disciples: "Teaching them" (the nations) "to observe *all* things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. 28, 20. Thus He would have His Church hold to the true doctrine, to the true faith, to the true confession in every point.

Now I ask again: To which church, to which of these com-

panies of men who profess the Christian faith and are gathered about God's Word, ought you to belong?

And the answer — you surely cannot be in doubt as to that. The answer is: You ought *not belong to a heterodox church, but to the orthodox church.*

Behold how the Word of God warns us against false teachers, false preachers, false prophets, and their followers, — how it warns us, therefore, against heterodox churches. The Lord Jesus says: "*Beware of false prophets*, which come unto you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves," Matt. 7, 15. St. John the Apostle writes by the Holy Spirit: "*Beloved, believe not every spirit*, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world," 1 John 4, 1. And the Apostle Paul exhorts by the Holy Ghost: "I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions" (discord and dissensions) "and offenses" (pernicious seductions) "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them," Rom. 16, 17.

And now behold how the Word of God exhorts you to abide by the true doctrine, the true Word, the true faith, and the true confession, how it thus exhorts you to abide with the orthodox church. The Lord Jesus says: "*If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;* and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," John 8, 31. 32. Even though we have to suffer reproach and mockery and persecution for it, yet should we abide there and with that church where the Word of Jesus and of God is taught, preached, believed, and confessed in its truth and purity; and we should not be ashamed thereof. For the Lord Jesus says: "*Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels,*" Luke 9, 26.

All false churches, then, you should avoid, and you should adhere to the orthodox church. Therefore open your eyes and prove the churches and see which churches are heterodox and which is the orthodox church. And do not be deceived by names or appearances, but examine the churches in the light of God's Word, into which this book is introducing you.

Now, perhaps it occurs to you to ask this question: Do you think that all people will be lost and be damned who belong to heterodox churches?

I reply: No. I have no such thought. People who belong to heterodox churches will by no means all be lost and be damned. As in the heterodox churches there is still some portion of the divine seed, that is, of the Word of God, so there still is in the heterodox churches some divine fruit, that is, believing Christians and beloved children of God.

“But,” you proceed to ask, “why do these believing Christians and beloved children of God remain in heterodox churches when God’s Word says they shall avoid heterodox churches and adhere to the orthodox church?

I reply: Because they are ignorant and lack that clearness of knowledge which is necessary to a proper understanding of the matter. Either they do not know the false doctrines taught in their churches to be false, or if they do know that false doctrines are taught in the church bodies to which they belong, yet they do not understand that God in His Word expressly commands them to come out of such churches and be separate from them and avoid them. And God in His great mercy forgives these believing Christians and beloved children of God who are and remain in heterodox churches — God in His great mercy forgives them this their weakness.

But two things I would not leave unsaid! First: If these believing Christians and beloved children of God who are found in heterodox churches truly understood the matter, if they truly understood that false doctrine is taught in their churches and that God commands them to avoid such churches — if they truly understood that, they would no longer remain in heterodox churches. And secondly: If any man who truly understands the matter, if any man who truly understands that in his church false doctrine is taught and that God forbids men to belong to such a church — if such a man nevertheless goes to a heterodox church, or remains in such a church — that man is not a believing Christian and beloved child of God, but he is a person that knowingly and willfully disobeys God; and such a man cannot comfort himself with the grace of God and the forgiveness of his sins.

My child, learn and know the divine and saving truth in all its parts. Avoid heterodox churches. Adhere to the orthodox church. Assist with all your powers in maintaining and spreading the orthodox church. Above all, be careful to be and remain a member of the invisible one holy Christian Church, that is, be

careful to be and remain a real believing Christian and beloved child of God. As it is written: "*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in faith; prove your own selves,*" 2 Cor. 13, 5.

This is, in brief, the doctrine of the Bible concerning the Church, concerning the congregation, or company, of believing Christians and beloved children of God.

Come, Holy Spirit, God and Lord!
Be all Thy graces now outpoured
On each believer's mind and heart;
Thy fervent love to them impart.
Lord, by the brightness of Thy light
Thou in the faith dost men unite
Of every tongue and every nation;
We, therefore, sing with exultation:
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Thou holy Light, our Guide divine,
O cause the Word of life to shine;
Teach us to know our God aright,
And call Him Father with delight;
From error, Lord, our souls defend,
That they on Christ alone attend,
In Him with living faith abiding,
In Him with all their might confiding.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of the Forgiveness of Sins.

The third point of the Third Article treats of the Forgiveness of Sins. It reads: "*I believe in the forgiveness of sins.*"

This point, of the Forgiveness of Sins, is the chief article of the Christian doctrine.

"I believe in the forgiveness of sins."

All the wrath of God, all the misery, all the death, all the damnation, which came upon all the world and upon you—all this came because of *sin*. And now you can, may, and should say: I believe in the forgiveness of sins. On the authority of the Scriptures, on the authority of God's own Word, you can, may, and should believe and be quite certain that God forgives you all your sins, yes, *forgives* them, pardons them, remits them, no longer imputes them, no longer charges them, no longer remembers them,

no longer is angry with you, no longer punishes you, no longer condemns you, for their sake. From the Scriptures you are to learn to speak thus: "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But *there is forgiveness with Thee*, that Thou mayest be feared," Ps. 130, 3. 4. And: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: *who forgiveth all thine iniquities*, who healeth all thy diseases," Ps. 103, 2. 3.

Dr. Luther in his Catechism teaches you to say: "*In which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers.*" This is what men have in the Christian Church, this is what all those have who believe in Jesus Christ: God forgives all sins unto them daily and richly. Blessed are the Christians! Blessed are the believers!

The forgiveness of sins is also called **JUSTIFICATION**.

"Just" means *righteous*; "to justify" means *to make righteous*.

God justifies us sinners, God makes us sinners righteous, in this manner: He *forgives us our sins*. God imputes to us sinners a perfect righteousness, declares us righteous, makes us righteous, justifies us, in this manner: He forgives us our sins, does not impute our sins to us. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God *imputeth righteousness* without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin," Rom. 4, 6—8.

Yes, that is the manner in which God makes us sinners righteous, justifies us. And who shall then lay our sins to our charge? "*It is God that justifieth*," Rom. 8, 33. Who shall then exalt himself above God, who shall interfere with God's judgment and condemn us because of our sins which God has forgiven?

* * *

WHAT IS THE CAUSE THAT MOVES GOD TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS AND JUSTIFY US?

This question I shall now answer.

Not anything that is *in us*, not any quality, merit, excellence, about us or in us; not any conduct, doing, work, of ours; nothing that is in us is the cause, or a cause, that moves God to forgive us our sins and so to justify us.

Everything that God's Law requires of us: how we should be, what we should do, and what we should not do — the Bible calls

all this "work," "the works of the Law." Well, such work, the works of the Law, is *not* a cause that moves God to justify us.

The Bible teaches that expressly. It teaches us to say: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, *without the deeds of the Law*," Rom. 3, 28. It says: "For there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified *freely*," Rom. 3, 23. 24. Yea, it says that God justifies "the *ungodly*," Rom. 4, 5.

The cause that moves God to justify us is solely His GRACE.

The Bible says: "For there is no difference: for all have sinned; and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by *His grace*," Rom. 3, 23. 24.

Now this grace of God "*came by Jesus Christ*," John 1, 17. Jesus Christ, our Substitute and Redeemer, acquired the grace of God for us. Thus THE GRACE OF GOD WHICH CAME BY JESUS CHRIST is the cause that moves God to forgive us our sins and justify us.

The Bible says: "For there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace *through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*," Rom. 3, 23. 24.

Other cause that moves God to forgive us our sins and justify us there is none, neither in heaven nor on earth, neither in time nor in eternity.

* * *

HOW DO WE BECOME PARTAKERS OF THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, OR OF JUSTIFICATION?

SOLELY BY FAITH.

The Bible teaches us to say: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified *by faith*," Rom. 3, 28. It says: "For there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation *through faith* in His blood," Rom. 3, 23—25. God has set Christ forth in His blood, which was shed for us to be a propitiation, to be a covering for our sin—and *through faith* we become partakers of this covering, this forgiveness of our sins.

What does that mean?

This I shall now explain and set forth in due order, out of the Bible.

But now pay strict attention.

Eph. 1, 7 it says: "In whom (Jesus Christ) we have redemption through His blood, *the forgiveness of sins*, according to the riches of His grace." — Here you see that the *redemption* which is through the blood of Jesus Christ, is, at the same time, *the forgiveness of sins*, that, when we were redeemed through the blood of Christ, there was, at the same time and by that same act, given us the *forgiveness of sins*. To be sure! Whoso is *redeemed* from his sins, to him his sins are *forgiven*. Could it be otherwise? Could we say: We are, indeed, redeemed from our sins, but our sins are not *forgiven* us? That would amount to nothing.

2 Cor. 5, 19 it says: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (unto the world). — From this you see that the *reconciliation* effected by Christ does, in itself, amount to this, that God *no longer imputes trespasses, but forgives them*, that to the world, which is reconciled unto God through Christ, sin is no longer imputed, but forgiven. To be sure! If the world is *reconciled* to God, God no longer imputes to the world its trespasses, but *forgives* them. Could it be otherwise? Could we say: God is reconciled to the world, indeed, but, nevertheless, He still imputes to the world its trespasses? That would amount to nothing. —

Therefore it says Rom. 5, 18: "As by the offense of one (Adam) judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One (Christ) the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." — Here you have it. The *righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ*, that, by His doing and suffering, He fulfilled the Law for all men, this is, at the same time, the *righteousness, the forgiveness of sins, the justification of all men*; since the *righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ* belongs to all men, it follows that *justification* belongs to all men — and that unto life and salvation. To be sure! Since the *righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ* belongs to all men, it follows that *justification and salvation* belong to all men. Could it be otherwise? Could we say: The *righteousness*, indeed, of the Lord Jesus Christ belongs to all men, but *justification, forgiveness of sins, and salvation*, does not belong to all men? That would amount to nothing.

Therefore it says 1 Cor. 1, 30: "Who (Christ) of God is made unto us . . . *righteousness*." — Here you see: Our *righteous-*

ness, our justification, the forgiveness of our sins, has been accomplished this long time, and been on hand; Christ is our Righteousness, our Justification, the Forgiveness of our sins. God has made Him such. Hence *you* need not, no man need contribute anything to accomplish justification, the forgiveness of sins. The forgiveness of sins is accomplished and on hand, has been this long time. Behold Christ: *there* is the forgiveness of sins and the justification, both of yourself and of the whole world.

Are you paying attention?

Are you thinking?

Now let us proceed.

2 Cor. 5, 19 it says: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." — So after God had shown the great mercy of redeeming the world through Christ and forgiving their trespasses unto them, of reconciling the world unto Himself and no longer imputing their trespasses unto them, of bringing the free gift upon all men unto justification of life through the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ achieved for all men, yea, of making Christ our righteousness — He committed unto us the WORD of this redemption and forgiveness of sins, of this reconciliation and non-imputation of trespasses, of this free gift come upon all men unto justification of life, of Christ, our Righteousness; to-wit: *the Gospel*.

And this Word, this Gospel, you must so understand that therein and thereby there is, in the first place, *revealed* the righteousness of God,¹⁾ that is, the aforesaid forgiveness of sins and free gift unto justification of life which came upon all men. And in the second place, by this Word, by this Gospel, there is *given* and *bestowed* with divine power and validity this righteousness of God, that is, this forgiveness of sins and free gift unto justification of life, which came upon all men. For Scripture says, in the first place, that "therein is the righteousness of God *revealed*," and, in the second place, that "it is the power of God unto salvation," Rom. 1, 16. 17.

This Word and Gospel, then, is like a note that is given you, a note, say, for a thousand dollars. By means of such note you

1) The righteousness of God = the righteousness that avails in God's sight.

are, in the first place, *told* that one thousand dollars are yours, and in the second place, the sum of one thousand dollars is actually, effectually, and validly *given* you, so that, having the note, you also have the one thousand dollars. Just so the Gospel *tells* you that the forgiveness of sins and justification has been acquired for you and for all men, and just so the Gospel furthermore actually *gives and bestows* upon you the forgiveness of sins and justification, and that with divine power and divine validity.

If, therefore, you have the Gospel, you therewith and thereby and therein also have the forgiveness of sins and justification, or in other words: you therewith and thereby and therein have Christ, our Righteousness. Hence, when the Bible would tell us how we obtain Christ, our Righteousness, it says thus: "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above). Or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ from the dead). . . . The *Word* is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the Word of faith which we preach," Rom. 10, 6—8.

And if you *receive*, if you *rely upon*, if you *BELIEVE IN* this Word and the forgiveness of sins and justification revealed and given and conferred upon you in this Word — you are a partaker of the forgiveness of sins and justification.

In what other way could you become a partaker of the forgiveness of sins or justification, in what other way than this: by faith alone? Give the matter a little thought. You shall not and cannot be justified by any work, doing, or conduct of yours. The forgiveness of sins and justification has been procured for you by Christ and has been on hand for you in Christ this long time. By the Gospel it is constantly being revealed and offered and given to and bestowed upon you. Hence to actually have it and be in possession of it, you merely need to accept it, you merely need to believe. That surely is plain. You merely need to believe for your own self in the great judgment of God whereby He has, in Christ and for Christ's sake, declared the whole ungodly world righteous, and forgiven their trespasses unto them. This gracious judgment of God is constantly sounded into your ear and heart. Believe in that judgment! Believe what God says! Then you will have the forgiveness of sins, the righteousness of God, that is, the righteousness which avails in God's sight. This your faith, this thing which you accept by faith, God counts unto you for

righteousness. Wherefore the Holy Spirit says: "To him that worketh not," that is, that does not think that he must, by any work, or doing, or conduct of his, obtain the forgiveness of sins, or justification, "but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly," that is, believes the word and declaration of God that He has pronounced this whole world of ungodly people righteous in Christ, "to him his faith is counted for righteousness," that is, he has and possesses, by this faith, the righteousness of God, Rom. 4, 5.

He that does not believe, he that rejects Christ, he that despises the gracious judgment of God, who has declared the ungodly righteous, he, indeed, has no forgiveness for his sins, no justification; and if he continues in such unbelief, he will be lost.

Believe! Take hold! Rejoice!

* * *

And you can and should be ALTOGETHER SURE of the forgiveness of your sins and your justification, with full and undoubting assurance. This you could not be if the forgiveness of your sins and your justification were dependent upon, and conditioned by, anything that is in you, any quality, merit, excellence, about you or in you, any conduct, action, or work of yours. In that case you would always have to be in doubt and say: Am I really in a proper condition to be entitled to the forgiveness of sins? But now, as you have clearly seen from the Word of God, the forgiveness of your sins is not conditioned by anything that is in you; the forgiveness of your sins and your justification is imparted to you solely by grace, for Christ's sake, without any condition to be fulfilled by you; yea, it is finished and ready and on hand for you, has been this long time; for in Christ it long since came upon all the world, by the Gospel it is constantly offered and given and bestowed upon you: you are merely to accept it, you are merely to believe that this is so, you are to believe God, who says that this is so. And here no sin is excepted, not even the most horrible sin there is. — Where, then, is there room for any doubt, for any uncertainty? Nay. You can and should be altogether sure of the forgiveness of your sins and your justification, with full and undoubting assurance. I repeat, therefore: Believe! Take hold! Rejoice! And I say: Believe, avail yourself, rejoice,

even though you be the wickedest man in the world! And then, then, when thus you are sure of the forgiveness of your sins and your justification, you will struggle against sin and lead a godly life. For such is the fruit of faith and the certainty thereof.

* * *

Moreover, you can and should be altogether sure, assured beyond the shadow of a doubt, that you will die in the forgiveness of your sins, that you will die a Christian justified by faith, and be saved; in other words, **THAT YOU WILL ENDURE IN JUSTIFYING AND SAVING FAITH UNTO THE END.**

What? Even that?

Yes, even that.

True, the Devil, the world, and your own flesh and blood are bent upon making you fall from faith. And true, you, in yourself, are much too weak to resist such foes and endure in faith.

But look up to God and mark the promise He makes you in His Word.

God has His Apostle write thus to Christians: "Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," 1 Pet. 1, 5. And: "Who shall also confirm you unto the end," 1 Cor. 1, 8. And: "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," Phil. 1, 6. And: "The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you and keep you from evil," 2 Thess. 3, 3. And the Lord Jesus Himself says of His sheep, that is, of all who believe in Him: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," John 10, 28.

Are not these divine promises enough to make you altogether sure that you will endure in justifying and saving faith unto the end?

Therefore believe these promises of God and say with St. Paul: "I know whom I have believed, and *am persuaded* that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day," 2 Tim. 1, 12. And: "*I am persuaded* that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord," Rom. 8, 38. 39.

O Thou merciful God! Out of pure grace, for Christ's sake,

Thou dost give unto me the forgiveness of all my sins. I am merely to accept it, merely to believe it. And Thou dost promise to keep me in such saving faith unto the end. O Thou merciful God!

O God the Father, who didst place
My sin and shame on Jesus;
Thou, God the Son, whose love and grace
My burdened soul releases;
Thou, Holy Ghost, who quicken'st me
Unto all good, I pray let me
Be to the end abiding.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of the Resurrection of the Body and the Life Everlasting.

The fourth point of the Third Article treats of the Resurrection of the Body. It reads: "*I believe in the resurrection of the body.*"

The Bible, the Word of God, teaches that at the last day, when the Lord Jesus Christ will come to judge the quick and the dead, God will raise up all the dead, so that their bodies, the same bodies that have died, will again be made alive.

The Bible teaches this, the Word of God. And the children of God believe this. Our depraved reason cannot comprehend this doctrine. "What!" it exclaims, "our bodies that have died and returned to dust and ashes and mingled with other creatures, with grasses and herbs and trees and animals, these shall again be made alive and shall rise? That is impossible!" Thus says our depraved reason. But our faith says: "With God nothing shall be impossible. And the Word of the Lord is right. I believe in the resurrection of the body."

And the Bible, the Word of God, is full of promises that our bodies shall rise again. I could quote hundreds of passages. Here is but one: "The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear His (Christ's) voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," John 5, 28. 29.

However, in the resurrection of the dead a great *difference* will be seen. This difference has already been indicated in the passage just quoted. This passage speaks of "the resurrection of life" and "the resurrection of damnation." The believers and children of God will rise to everlasting life, and that with glorified bodies. But the unbelievers will rise to damnation and everlasting death, that is, to everlasting shame, contempt, and torment in hell. The Bible says: "Many" (the multitude) "of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," Dan. 12, 2.

The believers and children of God will rise to everlasting life with glorified bodies. The Bible says: "Who (Christ) shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body," Phil. 3, 21. We children of God shall, in the Resurrection, have glorified, that is, spiritual, heavenly bodies, which shall be full of everlasting life and heavenly power, and shall shine like the sun, yea, shall be like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, how unspeakably grand and beautiful will our bodies then be! And yet they will be the same bodies that we have here, only they will be so utterly changed. Read the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians on the resurrection of the believers and children of God. There you will also find that they who on the last day, when the Lord Jesus comes, will still be living shall then be changed, so that also their bodies will be glorified. It says: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump," 1 Cor. 15, 51, 52. Joyfully, therefore, and cheerfully say with Job: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another," Job 19, 25—27.

But *the unbelievers* will rise to eternal death, that is, to everlasting shame, contempt, and torment in hell.

When the unbelievers, who have rejected Jesus and His Word, die, their souls will at once go to HELL. The Lord Jesus says: "The rich man also died and was buried. And in hell he lifted up his eyes," Luke 16, 22, 23. And on the last day the unbelievers will rise "to shame and everlasting contempt" in hell, the place of torment. And it is written: "Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto

all flesh," Is. 66, 24. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment," Matt. 25, 46. The Lord Jesus says: "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat," Matt. 7, 13. And He warns us not to despise by any means the merciful God and His Gospel. He says: "Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," Matt. 10, 28.

And be not deceived and misled by vain words, as if beside heaven and hell there were another, a third, place, purgatory or the like, where there would still be a chance to repent. The Bible knows of but two places: heaven and hell.

* * *

The fifth point of the Third Article treats of the Life Everlasting. It says: "*I believe in the life everlasting.*"

What does the Bible teach about the life everlasting? It teaches that all believers, when they die, are, according to the soul, at once present with Christ, and, after the last day, shall be with Him, both body and soul, and live with Him in eternal joy and glory in heaven.

When the believers die, they are, according to the soul, at once present with Christ. When Stephen, whom the Jews were stoning, was now about to die, he cried, being full of the Holy Ghost: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Acts 7, 58. And to the dying thief the Lord Jesus said: "Verily I say unto thee, *To-day* thou shalt be with me in paradise," Luke 23, 43. And it is written: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord *from henceforth*," Rev. 14, 13.

And there, in heaven, in paradise, in the presence of Christ, time will not seem burdensome to your soul. For, in the first place, you will be infinitely happy there. And, in the second place, there is no time in heaven. Thus from your death to your resurrection on the last day it will be to you but a blissful moment.

And after the last day all believers will, both in body and soul, be present with Christ and live with Him in eternal joy and glory in heaven. St. Peter writes: "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," 2 Pet. 3, 13. See Is. 65, 17; 66, 22; Rev. 21, 1. There all believers will be with Christ forever and will see Him and be like Him, that is, the image of God, which was lost through sin, will

be perfectly restored in them. The Apostle writes: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is," 1 John 3, 2. And there we shall have eternal joy and glory. David writes by the Holy Spirit: "In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore," Ps. 16, 11. Oh, we can neither tell nor conceive what we shall have there! St. Paul writes: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," Rom. 8, 18.

That is what the Lord Jesus means when He says of His sheep: "*I give unto them eternal life,*" John 10, 28.

* * *

This eternal life will be given to all believers, but to believers only, to such as shall, at the end of their life, be found to be in faith. The Lord Jesus says: "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that *whosoever believeth in Him* should not perish, but have *everlasting life*," John 3, 16. And He says: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John 3, 36. And He says: "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved," Matt. 24, 13.

Now, are you sure that you also will enter into eternal life?

My Christian friend, I have already shown you from the Word of God that God has promised to keep you in the faith unto the end.

But hearken! I will tell you one thing more from the Word of God. It is this: As God has, in this your time, called you by the Gospel, enlightened, sanctified, and kept you in the faith, even so — mark this well! — *even so He has from eternity chosen you and predestinated* (foreordained) *you unto the adoption of children and unto life everlasting*, and no man shall pluck you out of His hand.

Consider: That God has called us by the Gospel and enlightened us, and thus made us believers, and converted and regenerated us, that, furthermore, He has, by the Gospel, sanctified and kept us, and is willing to keep us still in true faith — that is

all His grace, His doing. Now, to do this unto us, unto this very thing He has from eternity chosen and predestinated us by grace, for Christ our Lord's sake. What God does for us in time, He has purposed to do from eternity. And this His purpose of grace, this His election of grace, this His gracious predestination, cannot fail. If you perceive that God has in time called and enlightened and sanctified, and kept you, and is willing to keep you still in true faith, you also perceive that He has from eternity chosen you unto the adoption of children and unto eternal life. And thus you are doubly and entirely sure that you will enter into eternal life.

Believe the Bible that such is the truth. The Bible says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: *according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world*, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: *having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself*, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved," Eph. 1, 3—6. And the Bible says: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the *called according to His purpose*. For whom He did *foreknow*, He also did *predestinate* to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom He did *predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified*," Rom. 8, 28—30.

With the children of God all is grace, pure, glorious, sure, divine grace; this reigns over them from eternity, throughout time unto eternity.

But do not presume to think that God has passed the other people, them that perish — that God has passed them by with His grace and been unconcerned about them. Far from it. You have learned from the Word of God that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; that the Lord Jesus would gather all together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings; that the Holy Ghost calls all men by the Word and would convert them. But many "would not." And thus these are lost through their own fault.

But as for thee, thou child of God, be full of joy and good cheer, and walk in God's ways and rejoice, looking forward to the life everlasting.

O Land of pure delight,
Of bliss and triumph bright!
Here's naught but joyful singing,
Here's naught but gladsome springing.
Here is no woe, no smarting,
No death, no bitter parting.

Hold on, my feeble mind!
Hold on, what wilt thou find?
Wilt fathom where no ground is?
Wilt measure where no bound is?
Forbear thy vain exploring,
O wisdom, bow adoring!

PART THREE.



CHAPTER I.

Of Prayer.

The THIRD CHIEF PART of the Catechism treats of Prayer.
What is prayer?

Prayer is an act of worship of the children of God wherein with their hearts and lips they bring their petitions before God, and offer up praise and thanks to Him.

We should pray with heart and lips, not with the lips only. God sees our inmost heart, and wants our prayer to proceed therefrom. And He understands every little sigh of desire and of praise and thanks. "Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble: Thou wilt prepare their heart, Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear." So says the Holy Ghost, Ps. 10, 17. In fact, God knows in advance all that we are about to pray. He says: "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear," Is. 65, 24. And therefore God by no means requires that we be profusely and elaborately wordy in our prayers. Far from that! As a loving Father He will find the simple lisping of His children acceptable. The Lord Jesus says: "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking," Matt. 6, 7.

What should induce us to pray?

God's command and promise as well as our own and our neighbor's need.

God has commanded His children to pray. This is a kind and gracious command. And He has promised to hear them when they call upon Him. This is even more kind and gracious. And there is so much need of body and soul on this poor earth, our own need as well as our neighbor's need. In such need we should turn to God and call upon Him, and He will hear us. He says: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," Ps. 50, 15. And our Savior says: "Ask, and it shall be given you," Matt. 7, 7.—Does not this induce you, O Christian, to pray?

To whom should we pray?

Only to the true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, since to Him alone such honor is due, and He alone is able and willing to hear our prayer.

Can there be any question about this? And yet, so many who term themselves Christians, for instance, the Roman Catholics, pray to angels and to so-called "saints," that is, to dead people. Angels are the servants of God and can only do what God commands them, and therefore we should not pray to them but to God. And the "saints" know nothing of us. It is written: "Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; Thy name is from everlasting," Is. 63, 16. "Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve," Matt. 4, 10.

What should we ask of God in our prayer?

Everything.

The Holy Ghost says: "Be careful for nothing; but in *everything* by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God," Phil. 4, 6. There is no burden which you may not cast upon the Lord in prayer. For God is your Father, and you are His child.

But *what distinction* should we observe in our prayers?

Such *spiritual* blessings as are necessary for our salvation and expressly promised to us by God, we should ask *without condition*. Such spiritual blessings are: God's grace, forgiveness of sins, God's Word and Holy Spirit, faith, preservation in faith unto the end. Such spiritual blessings God has promised us unconditionally, and so we should ask them without condition. The Lord Jesus says: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Luke 11, 13.

All other gifts we should ask *with the condition* that God would grant them unto us if they tend to His glory and our welfare. Would you, or would you dare to, ask for something whereby God would be dishonored? Would you, or would you dare to, ask for something that would be disastrous to you? If therefore you are not certain that a matter tends to the glory of God and to your welfare or that of your neighbor, then commit it to the will and guidance of God, and say: "Father, if Thou be willing —", "Lord, if Thou wilt —." Luke 22, 42; Matt. 8, 2. Ought you not to

have such confidence in your heavenly Father? You would surely not presume to act like a bad child that stubbornly persists in having its way. Think earnestly upon this matter!

How should we pray?

In Jesus' name and with firm confidence.

"In Jesus' name" means: relying upon and taking one's stand upon the merits of Christ in faith. This and this only gives firm confidence that God will hear. I will write you a little prayer in the name of Jesus, by which you can have firm confidence, and you will then easily understand what is meant. This is it: "Dear heavenly Father! I am indeed a poor, miserable sinner and not worthy to be called Thy child. But Thy dear Son, my Savior Jesus Christ, has reconciled Thee unto me, and has said that I should ask of Thee everything, even as dear children ask their dear father. Therefore, O my dear Father, I pray Thee that by Thy Word and Holy Spirit Thou wouldest keep me in the true faith to everlasting life. Thou wouldest also take my life and this poor body into Thy fatherly hands and deal with me kindly, lovingly, even as a dear father with his dear children. O my Father, I know that Thou canst not and wilt not deny this to me. Amen." Such is the prayer of which the Lord Jesus speaks when He says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you," John 16, 23. And: "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," Matt. 21, 22.

For whom should we pray?

For ourselves and for all other men; but not for the dead.

It certainly is clear to you that you should pray for yourself. But you should also pray for all other men, for you should love them as yourself. Therefore the Holy Ghost says: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men," 1 Tim. 2, 1. Also your enemies you should love, and pray for them. The Lord Jesus says: "Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you," Matt. 5, 44. But for the dead you should not pray, for they are in judgment already. If they are among the blessed, they do not need your prayer. If they are condemned, your prayer will not help them; yes, by praying for them you would dishonor God, the righteous Judge. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," Hebr. 9, 27.

Where should we pray?

Everywhere, and especially in the closet and in public worship.

There is no place in which you cannot speak with your God, and commune with Him. But that you might be undisturbed and pray without hypocritical display, do as Jesus says: "Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly," Matt. 6, 6. And when prayers are said in public worship, then take part in them in spirit and in truth.

When should we pray?

At all times, and especially in times of trouble.

"Pray without ceasing," says the Holy Ghost, 1 Thess. 5, 17.

If you are a child of God, there will evermore arise from your heart at least a sigh unto your Father who is near you. Do you not think so? Especially, however, in times of trouble flee unto your all-powerful and gracious Father, and seek Him, and call upon Him. Therefore the Holy Spirit says: "Lord, in trouble have they visited Thee; they poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them," Is. 26, 16.

Let there also be some rule and method in prayer, O Christian! Pray in the morning when you arise, and in the evening when you retire. Pray and give thanks when you sit down at meat, to God who provides all. Then you live with God as His child, and God will bless you.

Whence is it that many complain of their prayers being unheard?

That is their own fault, and for various reasons. It is chiefly because they are not, and do not want to be, God's children through faith in Jesus the Savior. They merely want to make use of God now and then to get what they want and desire from Him. But God does not let them make use of Him in that way. Another reason is, that people ask for foolish and hurtful things, or prescribe to God the time and manner when and how He should help. And then again the children of God, under the weight of tribulation, do not at once observe the helping hand of God, and so they think that God does not want to help them.

Does, then, God really hear every proper prayer?

Yes, most certainly, but in His own manner and at His appointed time.

When the Apostle Paul, in a childlike and humble manner, thrice besought the Lord that He would take a certain heavy burden from him, he was answered: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness," 2 Cor. 12, 9. And Paul was quite satisfied to have Jesus' grace and strength, and did not think that his prayer was not heard. And frequently the Lord says, very kindly, in answer to your prayer: "Mine hour is not yet come," John 2, 4. But the hour will not fail when He will cause us to see and to taste His mercy in gladness.

O child of God, rejoice that you have a God who is gracious unto you, and to whom you may pray at all times.

Help, Helper, help in fear and need,
Have mercy, to my prayer give heed!
I know Thou lov'st me still as Thine,
Though 'gainst me world and hell combine.

My God and Lord, I trust in Thee!
What need I if Thou art with me?
And Thou, Lord Jesus Christ, art mine;
My God and Savior, I am Thine.

Therefore my happiness is great,
I am content, for Thee I wait,
Trust wholly in Thy name, and when
I pray: Help, Helper, help! Amen.

CHAPTER II.

The Lord's Prayer.

Jesus, our Lord, has taught us a little prayer which for this reason is called "The Lord's Prayer." Surely, this must be the very best of prayers. You may find it Matt. 6, 9—13.

The Lord's Prayer is divided into three parts: the Introduction, the Seven Petitions, and the Conclusion.

THE INTRODUCTION.

The introduction is: "Our Father who art in heaven."

Here you see that God wants us to call Him our Father in all childlike confidence.

To these words Dr. Luther gives the following beautiful definition: "God would by these words tenderly invite us to believe

that He is our true Father, and that we are His true children, so that we may with all boldness and confidence ask Him, as dear children ask their dear Father.”

THE FIRST PETITION.

The First Petition is: “Hallowed be Thy name.”

The name by which God would be known of us is even this, that He is our dear Father through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Dr. Luther says: “God’s name is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be holy among us also.”

This, that the great God is our dear Father through Jesus Christ, our Savior, should be holy to us, yes, most holy of all things.

How is this done?

Dr. Luther answers thus: “When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead a holy life according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven! But he that teaches and lives otherwise than God’s Word teaches, profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, heavenly Father!”

By no other means, but only through the Word of God do we know that God is our dear Father through Jesus Christ, our Savior. By no other means, but only through the Word of God does this knowledge become holy in our hearts and remain holy therein. Therefore we pray, first of all, in this petition, that the Word of God be taught in its truth and purity among us. — If this, however, is holy unto us, that God is our dear Father, then we, as the children of God, should also lead a holy life according to His Word. For this grace also do we, therefore, ask in this petition. — By false teaching and wicked living on the part of those who term themselves Christians the name of God is profaned and dis-honored. And we should pray that our heavenly Father preserve us from this.

THE SECOND PETITION.

The Second Petition is: “Thy kingdom come.”

Here is meant God’s Kingdom of Grace on earth, to which all believers belong, and God’s Kingdom of Glory, into which all believers enter. Blessed they who belong to God’s Kingdom of Grace and enter into the Kingdom of Glory!

Dr. Luther says: "The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself; but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also."

How is this done?

Dr. Luther's answer is: "When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word, and lead a godly life, here in time, and hereafter in eternity."

THE THIRD PETITION.

The Third Petition is: "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

God's good and gracious will is this, that His dear name of "Father" be hallowed on earth even as in heaven, and that His blessed kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

Dr. Luther says: "The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also."

How is this done?

For the Devil and the wicked world and our own evil flesh, that is, our nature depraved by sin,—these three enemies continually war most bitterly against the fulfillment of God's good and gracious will among us.

For this reason Dr. Luther answers as follows to the question, How is this done? "When God breaks and hinders every evil counsel and will which would not let us hallow God's will nor let His kingdom come, such as the will of the Devil, the world, and our flesh; but strengthens and preserves us steadfast in His Word and faith unto our end. This is His gracious and good will."

And if in carrying out His good and gracious will toward us God sends us crosses and tribulations, and leads us along paths that are grievous to flesh and blood, then we should, nevertheless, say prayerfully: "Thy will be done!" For the paths God leads us are blessed paths.

THE FOURTH PETITION.

The Fourth Petition is: "Give us this day our daily bread."

Here Jesus, our Lord, manifests gracious concern for our bodily life, because of which so many cares beset us, and says that as dear children we should pray our dear heavenly Father to give us our daily bread and everything that belongs to the support and

wants of the body. Do you think that our heavenly Father will deny His children such a petition? Certainly not. And since the Son of God even commands us so to pray, we are doubly assured that our heavenly Father will not deny us such a petition. Therefore we should not give ourselves over to care, but pray and labor according to God's will. And even as little children on earth do not come to their parents and ask bread for the future, but come every day and say: Please, let me have something to eat! so should we also come each day, and say: "Give us this day our daily bread." And even as dear children gladly share with others what they have received, so should we likewise gladly help those who are in need. God does not only provide us for ourselves, but for others also. Whenever we say: "Give *us* this day *our* daily bread," we should include our brethren and sisters on earth.

Some one remarks: There are so many wicked people who never pray and yet live in constant plenty.

Dr. Luther says: "God gives daily bread indeed without our prayer, also to all the wicked; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to know it, and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving."

We, the children of God, surely do not want to be ungrateful unbelievers, but children, and thankful children, of God, who always comfort themselves with the love of their heavenly Father, also in affairs of the body, and shall never be ashamed. We pray for this grace.

What, then, is meant by daily bread?

Dr. Luther's answer is: "Everything that belongs to the support and wants of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, field, cattle, money, goods, a pious spouse, pious children, pious servants, pious and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like."

You should pray for anything that is necessary for your daily bread and the wants and support of the body.

THE FIFTH PETITION.

The Fifth Petition is: "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Every day we load upon our souls great guilt and debt, and deserve God's punishment in time and eternity by our trespasses

and sins as God finds them in our inmost thoughts, and desires, and words, and deeds, and by the omission of good and the commission of evil. And daily we should pray our Father in heaven that He would graciously, for Christ's sake, forgive us all our trespasses and guilt; that He would by no means look upon the greatness of our sins, nor on their account turn His countenance from us and deny our prayer; that He would by no means deal with us according to our deserts; but that He would forgive, forgive, graciously, for Christ's sake, forgive; and that He would thus allow us to pray for all good things, even as dear children ask their dear father, and would grant them unto us.

O how timid our heart often is to offer such daily petition! We think it impossible that God should again and again accept our prayer for forgiveness, and again and again permit us to ask Him for all good things while we are such great sinners. But upon the word and command of Jesus, our Lord, we must and will come again and again and pray for forgiveness and for all good things. God be praised that such a petition is taught us in the Lord's Prayer!

But then, so the Lord Jesus teaches us, we should promise God that we will also forgive those who trespass against us. Since we can live only because God forgives us our sins, this must be the first point in which we become like God and obedient to Him, that we heartily forgive and readily do good to those who sin against us. He that does not want to do this has no faith, but is a hypocrite, who has not the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins.

Dr. Luther explains the Fifth Petition as follows: "We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, nor on their account deny our prayer; for we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them; but that He would grant them all to us by grace; for we daily sin much, and indeed deserve nothing but punishment: so will we also heartily forgive and readily do good to those who sin against us."

THE SIXTH PETITION.

The Sixth Petition is: "And lead us not into temptation."

There are two kinds of temptations: temptations for good and temptations for evil.

The temptations for good come from God. The temptations for good consist in this, that God, in wise and merciful moderation, tries His children in order to purify and strengthen their faith, that they might cling to Him and to His grace more truly and firmly. You may read of such temptations for good in Gen. 22, 1—19, and Mark 7, 25—30.

The temptation for evil does not come from God, but from the Devil, the unbelieving world, and our depraved flesh and blood. The temptation for evil consists in this, that the Devil, the world, and our flesh would deceive or seduce us into misbelief (wrong belief and unbelief), into despairing of the grace of God, and into other great shame and vice. The object of such temptation for evil is to bring us to eternal perdition. Of such temptation for evil you may read in Gen. 3, 1—6, and Matt. 4, 1—11.

When our Lord Jesus bids us pray: "And lead us not into temptation," He speaks of the temptation for evil. God certainly tempts no one for evil. Let us hear Luther. He defines this petition most excellently by saying: "God indeed tempts no one; but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, so that the Devil, the world, and our flesh, may not deceive us, nor seduce us into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice; and though we be assailed by them, that still we may finally overcome, and obtain the victory."

If you retain this petition in your heart and on your lips, you will pass safely through all enemies and their temptations and afflictions, into eternal life. For what the Son here bids you pray God will certainly perform.

THE SEVENTH PETITION.

The Seventh Petition is: "But deliver us from evil."

Here on earth and in this poor life there are many evils, many things that are evil and grievous to bear, both of body and soul, of property and honor. And so we should pray our heavenly Father, all childlike, that He would entirely spare us many evils, or that, when He has afflicted us with a cross, He would either take it away from us, or help us to bear it and turn it to our benefit, and that He would finally, by a blessed end, wholly deliver us from all evil.

Dr. Luther says: "We pray in this petition, as the sum of all, that our Father in heaven would deliver us from every evil of

body and soul, property and honor, and finally, when our last hour has come, grant us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven."

Through this petition and its fulfillment all things will be well with us in time and eternity.

THE CONCLUSION.

The conclusion is: "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

In this conclusion we want to lay before our heavenly Father that He, indeed, alone is the Lord and King with whom we should seek help; that He alone has the power to grant our petitions, and that likewise all glory, honor, and praise accruing therefrom shall be His alone.

And lastly we should say: Amen.

The meaning of this is beautifully explained by Dr. Luther as follows: "That I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven, and heard; for He Himself has commanded us so to pray, and has promised to hear us. Amen, Amen, that is, Yes, yes, it shall be so."

O thou Christian and child of God, take the Lord's Prayer, learn it, meditate upon it, ponder it within your heart, lift up your hands, and pray the petitions which the Son of God teaches you to pray,— and what good thing can then be lacking unto you?

Lord God, who art my Father dear,
I pray in Jesus' name; O hear
What, trusting in His promised word,
I humbly ask of Thee, good Lord.

Grant us Thy Word, Thy Spirit give,
That by His grace we godly live,
Give shelter, peace, good friends, and food,
Protect our native land, O God.

Save us from sin and Satan's fraud,
Deliver us from evil, God,
Be with us in our dying hour;
Thine is the kingdom, glory, power.

Lord, at Thy word "Amen!" I say;
Increase my feeble faith, I pray.
Thou lead'st me with a father's care,
O let me be Thy child and heir.

CHAPTER III.

A Few Words to Show what is a “Means of Grace” and what is a “Sacrament.”

Our Lord Jesus Christ has by His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death earned for us poor sinners, us lost and condemned creatures, unspeakable treasures. Which are they? They are *forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost unto faith.*

And all these things Jesus, our Lord, has placed in the *Gospel* and has them communicated unto us, offered, given, presented unto us, through the *Gospel*. There is no other means by which we can obtain forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost unto faith, but only the *Gospel*.

And since the *Gospel* is the only means by which such grace of God is given to us, the *Gospel* is called a *Means of Grace*.

I should like to compare the *Gospel* unto a golden casket. If you open the casket, you find therein — speaking by way of comparison — three compartments or divisions. Each of these compartments or divisions, however, contains the same things, in each you find forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the Holy Ghost unto faith. By the first compartment I mean the *Word of God* as it is read and heard; by the second compartment I mean *Baptism*; by the third I mean the *Lord's Supper*. — Thus you might also say that there are *three means of grace*. And this is the usual way of putting it.

Now I want to explain why the *Word* is a means of grace, that is, why by means of the *Word* forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the Holy Ghost unto faith, is given us. — Because God says in His *Word* that He gives you forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the Holy Ghost unto faith, He therefore really and actually gives you these things through His *Word*. The *Word* does not merely *relate* to you the fact that God has given you this grace, but at the same time it *gives* you this grace. It is a means of grace. To use another simile, — it is just as with a five-dollar note that is presented to you. The note does not merely tell you something about five dollars, but actually gives them to you. The five-dollar note is five dollars. So it is with God's *Word*. Scriptures expressly call the *Gospel* “*a power of God unto salvation*”

tion," Rom. 1, 16; 1 Cor. 1, 18. 21. And Scriptures expressly say, if you would find the righteousness of faith, which is the forgiveness of sins, you must go neither here nor there, but "the Word which is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach," and therein you find that righteousness, Rom. 10, 8. And finally Scriptures expressly say that faith cometh by hearing the Gospel, Rom. 10, 17, the Gospel which is "the ministration of the Spirit," 2 Cor. 3, 8, and that the Spirit is received by the hearing of faith, Gal. 3, 2.

Why Baptism and the Lord's Supper are means of grace, that is to say, why by means of Baptism and the Lord's Supper forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the Holy Ghost unto faith, is given us, this I will explain more fully in the following chapters.

Right here I merely want to say that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are called *Sacraments*.

Let me explain what we call a Sacrament.

The word "Sacrament" means a sacred act. A Sacrament is a *sacred act ordained by God*. The Word of the Gospel is contained in it. But connected with the Word there is some external, visible thing which we should use. And by this act the grace which Christ has merited, that is, forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, is offered, conveyed, and sealed, that is, made sure, unto us.

You ought to ponder over this definition somewhat in order to understand it.

You will understand it best if I show it to you as it applies to Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Baptism is a sacred act ordained by God. What manner of sacred act is Baptism? We should be baptized with water, should be washed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, unto forgiveness of sins, and life and salvation, and that we might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. This is what the Word of God says of Baptism. Thus in Baptism there is the word of the Gospel. But connected with the Word there is an external and visible thing: water, with which we are to be washed. And by this act the grace which Christ has merited, that is, forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, is offered, conveyed, and sealed unto us.

The Lord's Supper is likewise a sacred act ordained by God. In this Sacrament we should eat and drink bread and wine, and thereby receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ unto the forgiveness of sins. That is what God's Word says of the Lord's Supper. Thus it is that the word of the Gospel is in the Lord's Supper; but connected with the Word are external, visible things, bread and wine, which we should eat and drink. And by this act Christ and the grace which Christ has merited, that is, forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, is offered, conveyed, and sealed unto us.

In this way Baptism and the Lord's Supper are called Sacraments.

There are no other Sacraments besides Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

In the Old Testament they also had Sacraments: Circumcision and the Paschal Lamb, of which I have already told you. But these Sacraments no longer obtain in the New Testament.

I may well say that God has ordained the Sacraments in order to make our faith in His grace firm and strong. For if we, each of us severally, receive visible things, and if the Word of God is connected therewith, to tell us that even so we receive the grace which Christ has merited, then, surely, this makes us strong and firm in the belief that we possess the grace of God.

To us in lost condition
Is given a Physician:
The Prince of Life died for us,
To life did He restore us.

His Word, His Font, His Table,
Are Means of Grace most able;
Through faith the Holy Spirit
Brings us to trust their merit.

Through Him are sins forgiven,
Made wide the gates of heaven;
Life and eternal treasures
Shall be our boundless measures.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

Now I will explain the FOURTH CHIEF PART of the Catechism, which treats of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism; and by the grace of God I will help you to a right understanding of holy Baptism, that it might be holy unto you.—

To baptize means to wash, to wash with water, simple, common water.

But, says Dr. Luther, “*Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water comprehended in God’s command and connected with God’s Word.*”

True, baptizing is done with simple water. But in this water and connected with this water there is God’s Word and command. Baptism is *commanded and instituted by God.* It is not a human or ecclesiastical ordinance or ceremony. It is of God. And *God through His Word gives unto Baptism a peculiar power.* It is not a mere outward ordinance or ceremony. It is a power of God.

What Luther states in his definition of Baptism, and what I have just enlarged upon a little, Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Matthew: “Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” Matt. 28, 19. When Christ, our Lord, says: “Baptize them!” this is a divine command to baptize. And when our Lord Jesus says: “Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” this is a divine word by which a peculiar power, a power of God, is given unto Baptism. What peculiar power? What power of God? This power, that through Baptism *a poor, lost, and condemned sinner is received into the gracious and blessed communion of the Triune God.* For by Baptism in the name of the Triune God nothing is meant but just this: to receive through Baptism into the communion of the Triune God.

If, however, through Baptism, a man, that is to say, a poor, lost, and condemned sinner, is received into the gracious and blessed communion of the Triune God, then certainly Baptism works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the Devil, and gives eternal salvation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost unto faith. For, certainly, a man cannot be in the communion of God and not have forgiveness of sins, and not be delivered from death and the

Devil, and not have eternal life, and not believe in the gracious God who gives him all these things.

Therefore Dr. Luther answers the question: "What does Baptism give or profit?" as follows: "*It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the Devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.*"

And the words and promises which God has connected with Baptism, and which God, as it were, has placed into Baptism, really declare and state this.

First I will quote you some words of God which show and bring it about that Baptism *works forgiveness of sins*, that God in Baptism gives you the forgiveness of sins:—

"Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins," we read Acts 22, 16.

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," Acts 2, 38.

"Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the Word," Eph. 5, 25, 26.

Now I will quote some words of God which show and bring it about that Baptism gives *life and salvation*, and therefore delivers from death and the Devil:—

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," says our Lord Jesus Christ, Mark 16, 16.

"Baptism does also now save us," 1 Pet. 3, 21.

"According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration" (Baptism), Tit. 3, 5.

Now if God through Baptism gives and presents unto you forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, then, in order to have and to hold and enjoy such grace, you must *believe*, that is, accept it through faith. Therefore Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Mark: "He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," and Dr. Luther says: Baptism gives eternal salvation to all who believe this.

And through Baptism God also gives you *the gift of the Holy Spirit* unto faith. You may see this from the following beautiful word of God: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of *the Holy Ghost*; which *He shed on us*

abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying,” Tit. 3, 5—8. Thus Baptism is a bath through which the Holy Ghost is poured out upon us abundantly, that we might believe and actually hold and enjoy the righteousness of faith and eternal life.

In short: In Baptism we put on our Lord Jesus Christ and all His grace and all the blessings which He has earned for us. And by accepting this in faith we become the children of God, and are thus received into the gracious and blessed communion of God, as it is written: “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ,” Gal. 3, 26. 27.

To sum up: Through Baptism God gives us forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost unto faith. Thus the Sacrament of Holy Baptism is a means of grace just like the written Word of God which is read and preached to us, and is part of the Gospel.—

Not to add something new, but to make more clear what has been said, I will write down a question and answer of Dr. Luther, and briefly dwell upon it.

Dr. Luther asks: “How can water do such great things?” He means to say, How can water work forgiveness of sins, deliver from death and the Devil, and give eternal life, so that, by accepting these things in faith, you have and hold them?

And his answer is: “It is not the water indeed that does them, but the Word of God which is in and with the water, and faith, which trusts such Word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is simple water, and no Baptism. But with the Word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says, Titus, chapter third: By the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior: that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying.”

Simple water and simple washing with water indeed does not do such great things. But it is the Word of God which, as you have seen, is in and with the water that puts such great things

into Baptism. And faith which trusts such Word of God in the water takes these great things out of Baptism and appropriates them. And then God says, Amen, Amen, now you have the things which I have given you through Baptism. For without the Word of God, without being connected with the Word of God, the water is simple water and no Baptism. And what is it together with the Word of God? With the Word of God the water is a Baptism in the true, divine sense. What is it? It is a gracious water of life, a water through which the grace of God is given you abundantly unto eternal life. And it is a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, a washing through which you poor, lost, and condemned sinner are born again to be a blissful, rescued, blessed, and dear child of God; for in Baptism the Holy Ghost is given you, who creates in you the saving faith in the grace of God in Jesus Christ, your Lord, and a new spiritual life, so that henceforth, being sure of the grace of God, you serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him.

O blessed, blessed Baptism!

Are you baptized? Do you believe this?

Note furthermore of what significance Baptism is for your daily walk.

We who are born again, we in whom the Holy Ghost through the means of grace has created and sustained the justifying and saving faith and therewith a new spiritual life,— we still and nevertheless have within us the “old Adam.” By the “old Adam” or the “old man” (Eph. 4, 22) is meant that total sinful depravity which through the fall of Adam has come upon us and is born in us. This old Adam we regenerated Christians and children of God still have within us. We behold this in the manifold sins and evil lusts which daily are within and on us.

But just because we are born again we also have the “new man” within us, that is, the new spiritual being and life which the Holy Ghost has created and sustained within us through the means of grace.

And now there is within us Christians and children of God a constant and daily *warfare* between the old Adam and the new man. The old Adam within us constantly says to all evil lusts: Yes, yes, that is what I want. The new man says: No, no, I do not want that. To all things that are well pleasing unto God the

old Adam says: No, no, I do not want that. The new man says: Yes indeed, I want that.

And what should and will be the daily result of such warfare between the old Adam and the new man within us? *The vanquishment of the old Adam and the victory of the new man.*

And how is this done? *Through daily contrition and repentance.* When we daily lament and repent our sinful depravity and the resulting manifold sins and evil lusts, and in true contrition beg our heavenly Father in the name of our dear Savior to be gracious unto us and to forgive us all our sins and to give us the power of His Holy Spirit, that we might not henceforth walk in the old evil lusts, but walk before Him in the newness and righteousness of life unto life eternal,—then and thus the old Adam is vanquished; and thus the new man conquers. Thus the old Adam daily loses his control over us, that we may not for his sake lose the grace of God, and that we may resist and suppress his evil lusts. And thus the new man daily acquires control over us so that we may walk and increase before God in faithful confidence in His grace and in good works. Thus the old Adam is, as it were, drowned daily within us, and dies with all sins and evil lusts; and thus there daily comes forth and arises the new man who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

And just this, that the old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts, and again a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever,—*this is the significance of Baptism for our daily life.*

And why has our Baptism such significance for our daily life? Our Baptism has this significance for our daily life because *through Baptism we have part with Christ.* “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ,” Gal. 3, 27. We are “baptized into Jesus Christ,” Rom. 6, 3. Jesus Christ, through Baptism, belongs to us, with all His salvation, with all His power, with His death and with His life. Even as He has buried our sins, so can and should we daily bury and avoid them; and even as He is risen from the dead and lives, so can and should we daily walk in newness of life. St. Paul through the Holy Ghost says: “We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life,” Rom. 6, 4.

I hope that you will now understand what Baptism signifies for your daily walk.

And I trust that you now understand Dr. Luther, who says in his Catechism :

“What does such baptizing with water signify? — It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.”

The Holy Ghost, who through Baptism works faith and so regenerates us, thereby deposits in our hearts the *vow*: *I renounce the Devil, and all his works, and all his ways; and I believe in God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, that I might be His own and serve Him only.* This baptismal vow — in these or other words, but in spirit and in truth — you should repeat every day. Thereby you enter upon a great and grave and a daily warfare. But God is with you, and victory is yours. —

This is what I wanted to say to you about the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. And I hope that you will carefully study this chapter. May God thereunto grant you His grace!

Baptized into Thy name most holy,
O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
I claim a place, though weak and lowly,
Among Thy seed, Thy chosen host;
Buried with Christ, and dead to sin,
Thy Spirit now shall live within.

My loving Father, Thou dost take me
To be henceforth Thy child and heir;
My faithful Savior, Thou dost make me
The fruit of all Thy sorrows share;
Thou, Holy Ghost, wilt comfort me
When darkest clouds around I see.

And I have vowed to fear and love Thee,
And to obey Thee, Lord, alone;
I felt Thy Holy Spirit move me,
And freely pledged myself Thine own,
Renouncing sin to keep the faith,
And war with evil unto death.

My faithful God, Thou failest never,
Thy cov'nant surely will abide;
O cast me not away forever,
Should I transgress it on my side;
If I have sore my soul defiled,
Yet still forgive, restore Thy child.

Yea, all I am, and love most dearly, —
 To Thee I offer 'new the whole;
 O let me make my vows sincerely,
 Take full possession of my soul;
 Let naught within me, naught I own,
 Serve any will but Thine alone.

Depart, depart, thou Prince of darkness!
 No more by thee I'll be enticed.
 Mine is indeed a tarnished conscience,
 But sprinkled with the blood of Christ.
 Away, vain world! O sin, away!
 Lo! I renounce you all this day.

And never let my purpose falter,
 O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 But keep me faithful to Thine altar,
 Till Thou shalt call me from my post.
 So unto Thee I live and die,
 And praise Thee evermore on high.

CHAPTER V.

More About Holy Baptism.

While I have, dear reader, in the preceding chapter shown fully and sufficiently from the Word of God what Baptism is, yet there are so many false teachers round about you who teach falsely about Baptism, that I must needs tell you a few more things in this matter to guard you against confusion and error. —

The chief false doctrine is this, that, while Baptism is instituted by God, it does *not* give forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, and the Holy Ghost unto faith, and that, hence, it is merely an outward ceremony, only an outward sign. — This false doctrine is found in the Reformed church and all the churches sprung from that church, such as the Methodists, the Evangelical Association, the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and others.

In the foregoing chapter I have quoted sufficiently from the Word of God to guard you against this false doctrine.

Now as respects *Baptists*, they have two additional false doctrines concerning Baptism. First they say that *it is wrong to baptize little children*, and secondly they say that *people must be immersed in Baptism*.

To keep you from the false doctrine mentioned in the first place, I will say to you from the Word of God that "all nations,"

that is, *all people, both young and old*, are to be baptized. The Lord Jesus says: "Go ye and teach *all nations, baptizing them* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. 28, 19.

The following distinction must of course be made: *Those who are old enough to receive instruction in the Word of God* are to be baptized after they have been previously instructed in the principal doctrines of the divine Word and Christian faith, and have confessed their faith. For the Lord Jesus says: "Preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," Mark 16, 15. 16. *Little children*, however, when born of Christian parents, or brought to Baptism by those who have authority over them, are to be baptized at once.

This last statement Baptists oppose.

Now it is useless to speak with Baptists about this point, because, as stated above, they look upon Baptism as a mere outward ceremony, a mere sign of conversion. But to you I will demonstrate from God's Word that little children are indeed to be baptized.

True, in Scriptures you will find no text which expressly charges us to baptize *little children*. But you will likewise find no text expressly charging us to baptize *men or women*. Scriptures merely direct us to baptize "*all nations*." And children certainly also are a part of "*all nations*."

Furthermore: The Savior certainly wants also the little children in His kingdom, and wants to save them. Mark 10, 13—15 you may read the following: "And they brought little children to Him, that He should touch them: and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

But: Little children are also flesh born of flesh and must therefore be born again to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus, our Lord, says: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," John 3; 5. 6.

Note then: This new birth, or regeneration, can properly take place in little children only *through Baptism*. For they can neither read nor hear nor understand the Word; and the Lord's Supper they may not have, as you will see later on. Hence little children are to be baptized.

And you will find instances recorded in the Bible where children have been baptized. For Lydia was baptized *and her household*, and the jailer at Philippi *and all his*, Acts 16, 15. 33.

And in the Old Testament it was expressly commanded to apply the means of grace and Sacrament of Circumcision upon little boys eight days old.

And finally, little children also can believe, just as well as you or any man. God the Holy Ghost, through Baptism, creates faith in them as well as in others. *How* this is done we do not know, but we know that it *is* done. The Holy Ghost enters the souls of baptized little children and there works faith. Matt. 18, 1—6 our Lord Jesus speaks of *little children*, as you may there see, and says: “*Which believe in me.*” And does not our Lord Jesus understand the matter better than Baptists who say that little children cannot believe and therefore should not be baptized? And if you would have an example of the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit to work faith in little children, read Luke 1, 15. 41—44.

Let no man confound you, neither with regard to your own baptism, if you have received it in infancy, nor with regard to Infant Baptism in general.—

As to the other false doctrine of Baptists, that men *must be immersed* in Baptism, mark what I tell you.

The word “baptize” is derived from the Greek language, in which the New Testament was originally written, and there reads “*baptizein*.” And *baptizein* simply means to *wash*, to wash with water. You may clearly see this from the following text: “When they (the Pharisees) come from the market, except they wash” (here the word *baptizein* is used in the Greek), “they eat not. And many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing (*baptizein*) of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables,” Mark 7, 4. Do you think that the Pharisees regularly immersed themselves and their tables? They may have done so with their cups and pots and brazen vessels. But the word *baptizein*, or “baptize,” merely means to wash.

And therefore it is wrong of Baptists to say that people *must* be immersed in Baptism, and that Baptism is not valid unless they are immersed. To baptize means to wash a man with water. It is immaterial whether this is done by immersion, or pouring, or sprinkling.

A few more remarks I will make.

Ordinarily the called ministers of Christ, the pastors, should administer Baptism. This is a part of their office, of which you will hear more in the next chapter.

But in case of necessity, say when an infant is at the point of death and there is no time to get the pastor, any Christian may and should administer Baptism.

In case of such an “emergency Baptism” take water and therewith wash the child, or pour, or sprinkle it upon the child, and say: “I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” If there is time, say the Lord’s Prayer or some other short prayer.

It is well, also, to have witnesses for this act, so that if the child should live, the pastor may ascertain that the child has been properly baptized.

Such witnesses are called *sponsors*. You find them at every infant Baptism. Their office is first, as has just been said, to testify that the infant has been properly baptized. But they are also to assist in caring for the Christian education of the child, and to pray for it.

That by the water and the Word
We’re born again, we thank Thee, Lord!
In life and death Thine let us be,
And Thine in all eternity.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Office of the Keys.

Before I speak of the other Sacrament, the Lord’s Supper, I will first treat of the FIFTH CHIEF PART of the Catechism, the Office of the Keys, and Confession. In the first place, of the Office of the Keys.—

By “office” we mean a service performed in the name, and at the command of, a superior, and therefore a power to act or

do something. For instance, a mayor's office is a service performed in the name, and at the command of, a community, and therefore comprises a certain power.

The Office of the Keys is not a secular, worldly, but a spiritual service and power. It is found only in the Church of God on earth, in the communion of saints. Christ, the Lord and King of the Church, has ordained and instituted it in His Church on earth, and He clearly defines its function and its power. The Office of the Keys is an altogether separate and particular, or as Luther's Catechism says, a "peculiar" office, a Church office which has nothing whatsoever to do with worldly affairs and judgments.

The Office of the Keys is solely and exclusively an office of the *Word*, the Word of God, and a power of the *Word*.

The Office of the Keys is the function and power *to preach the Gospel and to administer the holy Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper*. This is the first and general function and power comprised in the Office of the Keys.

Behold how the Lord Jesus ordained and instituted it. Before His ascension into heaven He said unto His disciples: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. 28, 18—20.

And the Office of the Keys also comprises the function and power *to forgive and to retain* (= not forgive) *sins*. This is the second and particular function and power of the Office of the Keys.

Behold how the Lord Jesus Christ has ordained and instituted this. After His glorious resurrection He said to His disciples: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained," John 20, 22, 23.

And because of this function and power this office is called the Office of the *Keys*. For by the remission of sins heaven is opened, and by the retention of sins heaven is closed. Thus Jesus our Lord also says: "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind" (shut out) "on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose" (admit) "on earth shall be loosed in heaven," Matt. 16, 19. We therefore speak of two keys: the *Releasing Key*, the forgiveness

of sins and the opening of heaven; and the *Binding Key*, the retention of sins and the closing of heaven.

The Word of God, however, determines very exactly whose sins should be forgiven and whose sins should be retained. To the *penitent* sinners, that is, to those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ, their sins should be *forgiven*. But to the *impenitent* their sins should be *retained* as long as they do not repent. This is God's great rule of which you have frequently heard. Therefore the Apostle Peter says by the Holy Ghost: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out," Acts 3, 19. And the Lord Jesus says on the other hand: "He that believeth not shall be damned," Mark 16, 16.

I will now quote the words of Dr. Luther from his Small Catechism. See whether you understand them from what has been said so far.

Dr. Luther asks: "What is the Office of the Keys?" — And he answers: "It is the peculiar Church power which Christ has given to His Church on earth to forgive the sins of the penitent sinners unto them, but to retain the sins of the impenitent, as long as they do not repent."

And Dr. Luther asks: "Where is this written?" And he answers: "Thus writes the holy Evangelist John, chapter twentieth: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

There is one point you will not understand from what has been said so far. And about this point there has been much lamentable strife. — Is it not a pity that there is so much strife on earth over matters of faith, while the Word of God is so clear? This is due to the sins of men. Men want to introduce their own thoughts into God's Word, refusing to submit fully unto it.

The point to which I refer is this. *To whom* did Christ give the Office of the Keys? *Whom* has Christ vested with the function and power to preach the Gospel, to administer the Sacraments, and, in particular, to forgive and retain sins? *Whom* has Christ honored so highly as to give him such an office?

With the Word of God I will slowly and gradually lead you to the right answer.

I will first speak of the particular function and power to forgive and to retain sins. *To whom* did Christ give this office and power?

One day our Lord Jesus said unto His disciple Simon Peter: “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,” Matt. 16, 19.

There is no doubt that here the Lord Jesus Christ gave the Office of the Keys to *Peter*.

And, basing on this, the Pope of Rome, and the entire Roman Catholic church, now says: Since the Lord Jesus Christ gave to Peter the Office of the Keys, therefore the Pope has the Office of the Keys and the power to forgive and retain sins; for Peter was the first Pope.

I could say many things to refute this. But I will merely say one thing. It is this:—When our Lord Jesus had arisen and appeared to His disciples on the evening of the Easter Sunday, He said unto them: “Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained,” John 20, 22. 23.

There is no doubt that here the Lord Jesus gave the Office of the Keys to His *disciples*.

And so that papal doctrine is put to shame. Not only to Peter, but to all His disciples the Lord Jesus gave the Office of the Keys.

And now other false teachers say: Since our Lord Jesus Christ gave the Office of the Keys to His disciples, therefore the pastors have the Office of the Keys and the power to forgive and to retain sins: for the disciples were the first pastors because they were Apostles.

In refutation hereof I will say: These disciples were not only the Apostles, but also a large number of men and women with them. And furthermore I will say:

One day the Lord Jesus instructed His disciples how to deal with a brother and fellow-Christian who commits sin. And this instruction was intended for all of us, unto the end of time. He said: “If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take

with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the *Church*: but if he neglect to hear the *Church*, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

There is no doubt that here the Lord Jesus gave the Office of the Keys to the *Church*, the Christian Church. That is, He gave it to every *local Christian congregation*, such as in this place or that is gathered about the Word and Sacraments, even though the congregation be ever so small, even though there be only two or three gathered together in His name.

And so the doctrine that Christ had given the Office of the Keys to the pastors is put to shame.

The true and correct answer, therefore, founded upon the Word of God, the answer to the question: To whom did Christ give the Office of the Keys? is this: *Christ has given the Office of the Keys to HIS CHURCH OR CONGREGATION on earth, more particularly, to EVERY LOCAL CONGREGATION.*

To Peter the Lord Jesus gave the Office of the Keys upon that one occasion merely because he proved himself to be a believing Christian. And to His disciples on the evening of Easter day He gave the Office of the Keys because they constituted the congregation of Christians in that place.

What has been said so far pertains to that *particular* function of the Office of the Keys which consists in this, that the *congregation* is to forgive and retain sins.

And also the *general* function of the Office of the Keys, to preach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments, is given to the *Church and every local Christian congregation*. For to His assembled Apostles the Lord Jesus said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen," Matt. 28, 18—20. From the words of the Lord Jesus: "I am with you alway, *even unto the end of the world*," you see that the Lord Jesus spoke not only to the Apostles, but to all believers. This you clearly see from the following words which, through Peter, the Holy Ghost addresses to all Christian believers: "Ye are a chosen generation,

a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye *should show forth the praises of Him* who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light," 1 Pet. 2, 9.

Yes, clearly and beyond question the Word of God says that Christ has given the Office of the Keys with all its duties and functions to the *Church* and to *every local congregation*, and not to one or a few only.

What, then, are *pastors*?

You see, in every congregation there are men and women, youths and adults, old people and little children, wise and simple, and whatever other distinctions might be drawn. And now consider. Unto all these is given the Office of the Keys with all its duties and functions. They are all commanded and they are all empowered by the Lord Jesus Christ to preach the Word of Christ in their midst; to administer the Lord's Supper; to baptize; to instruct the children in God's Word; to teach, to rebuke, to admonish, to comfort the adults, and to ground and confirm them in the faith; to forgive the sins of the penitent sinners unto them, and to retain the sins of the impenitent as long as they do not repent. Can all these diversified members of the congregation step up publicly in the congregation and perform these functions of the Office of the Keys? No, they certainly cannot. And if an attempt were made to that effect, endless disorder and confusion would result.

And God by no means wants this.

That there might be a proper performance of the various functions of the Office of the Keys in the Christian congregation, God has instituted a special order. God has ordered that in the Christian congregation there should be *special servants, ministers, of the Word, who shall publicly perform the functions of the Office of the Keys in the name of the congregation.*

Therefore we read that Paul and Barnabas ordained "elders" in every church, Acts 14, 23. And these "elders," or "bishops," or "presbyters," or "teachers," as they were then called, are now commonly termed *pastors* or *ministers*.

That God Himself has instituted this order you may see from the following words of Scripture: "*God* hath set some in the Church, . . . *teachers*," 1 Cor. 12, 28. "*He* (Christ) gave some, . . . *pastors* and *teachers* for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," Eph. 4,

11. 12. And to the "elders" of the churches of Ephesus in assembly the Apostle Paul said: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the *Holy Ghost* hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood," Acts 20, 28.

So it is God, the Triune God, who "gives" pastors to the congregations. For a congregation to have a pastor is not a human but a divine order. God gives to the Christian congregation its pastor.

But *in what manner* does God give pastors to the Christian congregations?

Not in the manner in which God called the Prophets and Apostles of old. God gave Prophets and Apostles by choosing and calling them directly, immediately, and personally, without employing the agency of man. See Matt. 10, for example.

To the various local congregations God gives pastors in this manner, that *the congregation itself chooses and calls its pastor*. In obedience to the divine order a congregation should look about for a Christian man who is able to teach, and should choose and call him as its pastor, and upon him it should confer or depute the Office of the Keys given to the congregation, that he might publicly administer it with all its functions, in the midst of that congregation. When a congregation has done this, and when the man so chosen has accepted the call extended to him, then God has given this pastor to this congregation. The aforesigned "elders" of the Christian congregations at Ephesus were all men thus chosen and called by the congregations. And nevertheless the Apostle says that *the Holy Ghost has made them overseers*, to feed the Church of God.

In this manner the pastors of local congregations are given by God. It cannot be otherwise. It is evident that God no longer calls immediately. And since in a local Christian congregation all have equally children's rights before God, no one is permitted to arrogate the ministry to himself. And since through divine bestowal the local congregation itself holds the Office of the Keys, no one on earth has authority, without its consent, to give unto such congregation a pastor or minister who is to publicly perform the Office of the Keys in its midst and in its name. Each congregation is to choose and call its pastor. This is not contradicted but confirmed by Acts 14, 23, where Paul and Barnabas are said

to have "ordained" elders in every church. For the Greek word here given with "ordained" expressly indicates that Paul and Barnabas caused the congregations to vote by the lifting up of hands and thus to choose and call their elders. This is also the meaning of Tit. 1, 5.

And when a pastor does not rightly perform his office in the congregation, according to the Word of God, or when he is a manifest slave of sin, it becomes the right and duty of the congregation to depose him and to elect another pastor.

What, therefore, is a pastor?

A pastor is a servant of Christ, given or appointed by God through the choice and call of a Christian congregation, who in the name of the congregation publicly performs the functions of the Office of the Keys in its midst.

Pastors should say with Paul: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God," 1 Cor. 4, 1. And every pastor should say unto his congregation, with Paul: "For if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it" (because of the office conferred upon me by you) "in the person of Christ," 2 Cor. 2, 10.

* * *

After having thus shown you, my dear reader, what the Office of the Keys is and how it is publicly administered in the congregations, let me now show you how you should properly respect it and use it, in faith.

What, then, do you believe concerning the Office of the Keys according to the Word of God that you have heard about it?

Dr. Luther answers this question as follows:

"I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, especially when they exclude manifest and impenitent sinners from the Christian congregation, and, again, when they absolve those who repent of their sins and are willing to amend, this is as valid and certain, in heaven also, as if Christ, our dear Lord, dealt with us Himself."

"The called ministers of Christ" are the pastors, chosen and called by the congregations and so appointed by God.

Whatever the pastors in their congregations and in the performance of their office deal or do they must do "by His" (the Lord Jesus Christ's) "divine command." They must say or do

only those things which Christ has commanded. They are merely to be mouthpieces and servants of Christ the Lord. A pastor who in his congregation says or does otherwise than Christ has commanded is unworthy of his office.

Now, whenever the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, this is as valid and certain, in heaven also, as if Christ, our dear Lord, dealt with us Himself. If a pastor preaches the Word of God, this is as valid and certain as if Christ were preaching in person. And God in heaven says, Amen! If a pastor baptizes in accordance with Christ's command, this is just as valid and certain as if Christ were baptizing in person. And God in heaven says, Amen! If a pastor administers the Lord's Supper in agreement with the institution of Christ, this is just as valid and certain as if Christ administered the Sacrament in person. And God in heaven says, Amen! If a pastor instructs, rebukes, admonishes, comforts, with the Word of God, this is just as valid and certain as if Christ instructed, rebuked, admonished, and comforted in person. And God in heaven says, Amen! If a pastor forgives the sins of the penitent sinners unto them in accordance with the command of Christ, this is as valid and certain as if Christ, visibly and in person, forgave the sins. And God in heaven says, Amen! If the pastor retains the sins of the manifest and impenitent sinners, agreeably to the order of Christ, our Lord (of which order I shall speak directly), and excludes them from the Christian congregation, this is as valid and certain as if Christ, visibly and in person, retained the sins and excluded these sinners from the Christian congregation. And God in heaven says, Amen! If a pastor absolves those who repent of their sins and are willing to amend, that is, if he cancels the retention of sins and exclusion from the Christian congregation, in accordance with the command of Christ, this is just as valid and certain as if Christ, visibly and in person, absolved, forgave the sins, and again admitted these penitent sinners into the Christian congregation. And God in heaven says, Amen!

This you must believe.

And you should help in bringing about such a state of affairs in your congregation that the members act and believe according to these words.

Let me tell you more about the Key of Absolution (Releasing Key), and more particularly about the Key of Excommunication (Retaining Key).

The pastor of a Christian congregation is to forgive the sins of the penitent sinners of his congregation. And thus it is Christ who does this through him. — Would to God that diligent use were made of this office of the pastors by our Christian congregations! We miserable creatures sin in many ways. Must not these sins burden our heart and conscience? Therefore we ought to go to our pastor and speak to him about in this manner: "Pastor, I have sinned. And I am heartily sorry for it and sincerely repent of it. And I long for the assurance of the forgiveness of my sins for Christ's sake. And since you hold that office in the congregation through which sins are forgiven, I beg you to perform that office and to forgive my sins unto me. With the help of God I will amend my sinful life and gladly do what God's Word bids me do." Then it behooves the pastor to forgive the sins in Christ's stead. How much consolation would result therefrom! How great a spiritual blessing it would bring!

Perhaps you say: "The pastor is to forgive the sins of the *penitent* sinners unto them. But certainly a pastor cannot look into the heart and know whether a person is truly penitent or only a sanctimonious hypocrite. How about this?"

I answer: Unless it is manifest and apparent that a person is impenitent, the pastor should forgive the sins unto him as he desires it. If he is a hypocrite, God will find him. A hypocrite does not accept the proffered forgiveness in faith, and therefore actually is not in possession of this heavenly gift. But the pastor is unable to judge this. Only to the manifestly and evidently impenitent sinners the pastor is to refuse forgiveness, to retain their sins, and to exclude them from the Christian congregation. —

Let me show you *in what manner the retaining of sins and excommunication from the Christian Church should be performed.*

In this manner: — *When an offender has committed an unquestionably manifest and evident sin, or continues in it, and remains impenitent even after he has been duly admonished according to Christ's precept and order, the congregation declares such a sinner a heathen man and a publican, and such judgment is publicly announced by the pastor.*

This I will explain more fully and substantiate it from the Word of God.

If the retaining of sins and the excommunication of a sinner from the Christian Church is in question, it must first be ascertained that a *sin* has actually been committed, or that the offender is continuing in it. Do you understand what I mean? There must be a manifest and evident sin against God's clear and indubitable Word. If a person has transgressed human enactments and ordinances, or if it is merely a suspicion resting upon him and an evil appearance, or if it is merely the opinion of the majority that he has committed sin, then the sin cannot be retained nor can such a one be excluded from the Christian Church. Be sure to note this!

Furthermore it must be established beyond doubt that the offender is *impenitent*, that is to say, that he does not repent of his sin, does not believe in his Savior, and refuses to amend. Wherever the possibility remains that a person still has the faith in the Savior Jesus Christ, the sin of such a person may not be retained, nor may he be excluded from the Christian Church.

How can it be determined, determined beyond doubt, that a sinner is impenitent?

If the sinner has previously been dealt with according to the instruction and command of Christ, our Lord, and still does not repent of his sin nor wants to amend, then we may and must be undoubtedly certain that such a sinner is impenitent.

What is the instruction and command of Christ, our Lord, in such a case?

It is this:—

Matt. 18, 15—17 it is written: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee," that is, if your brother and fellow-Christian commits an evident sin against God's command, either against you or so that you see and behold the sin, "go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." You should go to him (do you hear?) and in a kind manner seek to persuade him of his sin and to bring him back to the right course. This you should do in all love and patience. "If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." This is the first degree of admonition in which we should deal with our erring brother. And in many instances the sinning brother will be gained in this degree.

Now the Lord Jesus continues: "If he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two (brethren) more, that in the mouth

of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” A deeper impression will be made upon your sinning brother, if not you only, but others also point out to him the danger in which his soul is. Here, too, much patience and love should be employed and the intention be uppermost to win the brother.—This is the second degree of admonition in which we should deal with our sinning brother. And in many instances the sinning brother will be gained in this degree.

Our Lord Jesus continues: “If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church.” Then, together with your witnesses, go before the congregation, which by the pastor has been called to meet in regular assembly of its voting members, and there report the sin of your brother and all that has already been done to win him. And then the congregation should investigate the case, and if it becomes convinced of the sin of the brother, it should unitedly seek to win him with the Word of God. This will make the deepest impression upon the sinning brother, thus to be admonished by the entire congregation. And the congregation should exercise all love and patience.—This is the third degree of admonition in which we should deal with our sinning brother. And in many instances the sinning brother will be gained in this degree.

Now the Lord Jesus continues: “If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” Then he certainly is impenitent and no longer a Christian.

In this way, as now shown from the Word of Christ, it can be established beyond doubt that a brother who has committed a manifest and evident sin against God’s clear and indubitable Word, or is continuing in the same, is impenitent.

Such a person the congregation should declare a heathen man and a publican, retain his sins and exclude him from the Christian Church. For Jesus, our Lord, says in the 18th and 20th verses of the above-named chapter: “Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye” (the congregation) “shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.” And: “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” And the pastor is to publicly announce such judgment of the congregation.

How dreadful, if it must come to this with a sinner! For the Lord Jesus Christ says: “Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.”

And yet such a “ban”—for so the exclusion or excommunication from the Christian Church is called—is not intended for the perdition, but for the salvation of the soul of the impenitent. It is God’s will that the impenitent, through the ban thus executed, should have a foretaste of the last and awful word of judgment which all who die impenitent must hear: “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels,” Matt. 25, 41. Hereof, I say, the ban is to give the impenitent a foretaste, a forewarning, that they may be wholesomely affrighted betimes, and repent and be saved.

If one who is banned or excluded from the Christian Church repents, confesses his sins unto the Church, and promises to amend his ways, the congregation is to receive him as a brother, and the pastor should make public announcement thereof.

In support of this I will tell you a short Bible story.

In the time of Paul the Apostle there was a man in the congregation at Corinth who had taken his stepmother to wife. This was a manifest and evident sin against God’s clear and manifest Word. It offended many Christians in Corinth and in other congregations. But the congregation at Corinth did not deal with him according to God’s Word and did not exclude him, but continued him in the congregation. Thereupon the Apostle wrote to the congregation as follows: “It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.” And with many other words the Apostle rebuked the Corinthians and admonished them to do the right thing with this man,—“that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” You may read this in 1 Cor. 5. The congregation at Corinth readily took the admonition and banned the man, who had proved to be an impenitent sinner. Then the man repented. Paul heard of it. And now he wrote again to the Corinthians and instructed them to receive the man as a brother. He wrote: “Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. To whom ye forgive anything,

I forgive also: for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ." You may read this in 2 Cor. 2.

Now I hope you understand the Office of the Keys.

O faithful God, we worship Thee!
Thou pardon'st our iniquity,
Thou grantest help in sin's distress,
And soul and body Thou dost bless.

Thou through Thy servant say'st to me:
"Thy sins are all forgiven thee,
Depart in peace; but sin no more,
And e'er my pardoning grace adore."

O Lord, we bless Thy gracious heart,
For Thou Thyself dost heal our smart,
Through Christ our Savior's precious blood
Which for the sake of sinners flowed.

Give us Thy Spirit, peace afford
Now and forever, gracious Lord!
Thy Word and holy Sacrament
Preserve to us till life is spent.

CHAPTER VII.

Of Confession.

By Confession we understand a peculiar divine service of the children of God.

Let me first explain a few words we shall have to use in treating this subject:

"Confession" is the act of confessing sins.

"To confess" is to admit guilt of sin.

"Confessor" is the name given to one who hears the confession, that is, to the pastor.

"Absolution" is, pronouncing the remission of sin, or, forgiveness of sin.

Now, what is that peculiar divine service of the children of God which is called "Confession"?

Luther says: "Confession embraces two parts: one is, that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, from the confessor, as from God Himself, and in no wise doubt, but firmly believe, that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven."

I am sure you understand this, for it has been explained to you in the foregoing chapter.—

There are two forms of confession. First, *Private Confession*, and secondly, *General Confession*.

Private Confession consists in this, that a Christian privately, that is, alone, goes to his pastor and before him confesses his sins and thereupon receives Absolution. There is special comfort obtained in Private Confession. First, forgiveness is spoken to that Christian particularly and in person. And furthermore, a Christian there has opportunity to confidentially tell his pastor of such sins as may above others weigh heavily upon his heart and burden his conscience, to get particular advice and consolation from the Word of God concerning them, and, finally, for just these sins receive forgiveness from the pastor as from God Himself.

Such Private Confession is not in common use nowadays. This is to be lamented. It is due partly to the fact that we poor Christians have become laggard and lukewarm in our Christianity, and partly it is because it is feared that Private Confession might degenerate into the "auricular confession" of the Roman Catholic church, which is made a torture and an abomination by the priests. For in "auricular confession" those who confess must name all their sins, and their most secret thoughts are inquired into; and if they forget or conceal a sin, they receive no absolution for it. Would to God that Private Confession of the proper kind would come into greater use again!

General Confession is as follows. The pastor announces a certain day and hour for the same. Those who wish to go to Confession come to him and give him their names, in order that he might know who they are, and that he might have opportunity to give them pastoral advice, and that he might make sure that no manifest and impenitent sinner is among them. And when at the appointed time the confessants have assembled, a hymn is sung, a prayer is spoken, and the pastor gives suitable instruction from the Word of God. Hereupon he exhorts the confessing congregation to bow their knees before God and to join him in a confessional prayer about as follows:—

"O Almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto Thee all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended Thee and justly deserved Thy punishment in time and eternity. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray Thee, of Thy boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter suffering and death of Thy

beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being. Amen."

Then the pastor rises and addresses the following question to the congregation which is still kneeling:

"And now I ask you before God, Is this the sincere confession of all of you, that you heartily repent of your sins, believe on Jesus Christ, and sincerely and earnestly purpose by the assistance of God the Holy Ghost henceforth to amend your sinful lives; then declare so by saying, Yes."

The persons confessing answer, "Yes."

Then the pastor announces the holy Absolution as follows:

"Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins, in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The confessional service is then concluded with a hymn, prayer, and benediction.

Wherever, as in most places, this General Confession is in vogue, the persons confessing should know that God is present, and before God they should truly confess their sins, before God they should truly answer, Yes, and they should receive the Absolution spoken by the pastor as from God Himself. —

In his Small Catechism Luther puts the question: "What sins should we confess?"

And he answers: "Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not know, as we do in the Lord's Prayer; but before the confessor we should confess those sins only which we know and feel in our hearts."

In saying: "Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not know, as we do in the Lord's Prayer," Luther means this:

When we go to confession, we should confess before God that we have not kept any of His commandments, and should therefore plead guilty of all sins. This we do daily in the Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, where we say: "Forgive us our trespasses!" And though we may not perceive this in every particular, yet we should believe and know that it is so: we are guilty of all sins. We should say as David said: "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults," Ps. 19, 12.

But before the confessor, in Private Confession, or in the announcement to Confession, we should confess those sins only which we know and feel in our hearts; as I have explained.

Now let me seriously call your attention to one thing. If you have in any way grieved or offended your *neighbor*, you must confess this sin unto him also and ask his forgiveness. If you refuse to do this, you thereby prove that likewise you do not truly plead guilty of your sins before God, and that your confession is a mockery, and that you will not accept and receive the Absolution in true faith.— Will you note this?— It is written: “Confess your faults one to another,” James 5, 16. And our Lord Jesus says: “If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift,” Matt. 5, 23, 24. This was spoken primarily of the Old Testament divine service, in which sacrifices were made. You should apply it as follows: If, through the Office of the Keys, you desire forgiveness, and then remember that you are not reconciled to your brother, go and first be reconciled to your brother, and then come unto the Office of the Keys. Is this not clear?—

Since in Confession you want to confess your sins and receive forgiveness for them, it becomes necessary that you should previously *examine yourself*, in order that you might know your sins aright. Dr. Luther gives the following excellent instruction for self-examination before Confession. He says: “Here consider your station according to the Ten Commandments, whether you are a father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, servant; whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful; whether you have grieved any person by word or deed; whether you have stolen, neglected, or wasted aught, or done other injury.”

So you should consider in what station and calling you are. And then you should take the Ten Commandments and examine yourself according to them, to see whether in your station and calling you have done what the Ten Commandments require of you. You will then find plenty of sins, no matter who you are. Be truly sorry for your sins, go to Confession, confess them, and receive the holy Absolution, and then depart cheerfully and amend your life.

The so-called Reformed church and its daughter churches (Methodists, Evangelical Association, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, etc.) deny the right doctrine of the Office of the Keys and of Confession, even as they deny that of Baptism. They claim that God's Word merely says and relates that God would forgive the sins of the penitent; but that God does not actually forgive sins through His Word, and that God has not instituted an office through which sins are forgiven or retained. According to their notion a man must obtain the certainty of the forgiveness of his sins in other ways, through his feelings, or in some similar way. Thus they rob themselves of a great and firm consolation, and build upon sand.

May the faithful God grant you to know that through His Word and the Office of the Keys He truly gives you the forgiveness of sins, and in faith to firmly and cheerfully comfort yourself therewith.

This is the Power of Holy Keys,
It binds and doth again release;
The Church retains them at her side,
Our mother and Christ's holy bride.

Let those who stings of conscience bear,
Whom sin would drive to dark despair,
To Jesus come with trustful mind
And peace in Absolution find.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Lord's Supper.

This is the subject of the SIXTH CHIEF PART of the Catechism. The Lord's Supper is the second Sacrament.

It is also called the Lord's Table, the Breaking of Bread, the Sacrament of the Altar, the Holy Supper, the Eucharist, Holy Communion.

I will first show you

HOW THE LORD'S SUPPER WAS INSTITUTED.

In the night in which He was betrayed, in the night before His bitter suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ for the last time ate the Passover with His disciples.

Do you remember what the Passover was? A lamb was slain. With the blood of the lamb the two side-posts and the upper door-posts of the houses were stricken. The lamb was roasted, and eaten together with unleavened bread. This was done in remembrance of the exodus of the children of Israel out of Egypt, as you may read in the 13th chapter of Part One of this book. And this was also done to prefigure the fact that Christ, the Messiah, should be sacrificed for us, and that through faith we should appropriate unto us the fruit of His suffering and death, which is given us in the Word and Sacraments, in order that the judgment of God might pass over us poor sinners. (Hence "Passover.") And this was the second Sacrament of the Old Testament.

This our Lord Jesus Christ celebrated together with His disciples in the night in which He was betrayed.

As they sat down to eat the Paschal or Easter lamb our Lord Jesus said: "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." So this was to be the last prefiguring Paschal meal. Now its fulfillment was to come in the kingdom of God. Now He, the true Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, was to be sacrificed.

After the Passover had been eaten, our Lord Jesus did something else, something new and peculiar.

He took *bread*, gave thanks, broke it into pieces, and gave it to His disciples, saying as He did so, "Take, eat!" Then He said: "THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU: this do in remembrance of me."

After the same manner also He took the *cup*, — filled with wine, which, according to ancient usage, was passed around at the Passover, — gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: "Take, drink ye all of it!" As the cup was passed around and the disciples were drinking, the Lord repeatedly said words the sum of which is this: "THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, WHICH IS SHED FOR YOU FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS. This do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." Matt. 26, 26—28; Mark 14, 22—24; Luke 22, 19, 20; 1 Cor. 11, 21—25.

Thus our Lord Jesus instituted a new, a New Testament Supper, a Supper of fulfillment, in place of the Old Testament, the prefiguring Paschal meal.

Understand this correctly!

As the Lord Jesus Christ stepped in place of the prefiguring Paschal lamb and gave His body into death for our sins, and shed His blood for us for the remission of sins, even so now in place of the prefiguring lamb He gave unto us Christians *this His body, given for us, and this His blood, shed for us, that we might eat and drink it under the consecrated bread and wine.*

How this is done we can by no means understand, nor should we brood over it and seek to understand it. We believe it to be so because the Lord Jesus says so in the plainest of words.

And in this Supper we receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, for His body and blood is given and shed for us for the forgiveness of sins, as He expressly states.

In order to receive and to have and to hold and to enjoy this grace, we should, as often as we celebrate this Supper, remember Him, our Lord Jesus Christ, in faith, as He commands.

And we should keep this feast "not with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," 1 Cor. 5, 8.

And we should be as they who are in haste to reach their heavenly home.

This, briefly, is the institution of the Lord's Supper, concerning which, however, I want to tell you more.

From Egypt do *we* pass to-day,
From cruel Pharaoh's tyrant sway;
The Paschal Lamb in truth we take
In wine we drink and bread we break.
Hallelujah!

We also eat unleavened bread,
As Moses to his people said;
No leaven shall among us be,
From willful sin we shall live free.
Hallelujah!

Th' avenging angel passes o'er,
The firstborn shall he slay no more;
Our doors are striken with Christ's blood:
That keeps from us the wrath of God.
Hallelujah!

* * *

After having briefly described this Sacrament to you and the institution of the Lord's Supper, I will now speak more fully about it in detail, that you may become firm in the faith in this wonderful Sacrament.

FIRSTLY, WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER?

What is it that you there eat and drink?

Dr. Luther asks: "What is the Sacrament of the Altar?"

His answer is: "It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ Himself."

And he asks: "Where is this written?"

And he answers: "The holy Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and St. Paul, write thus:

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you: this do, in remembrance of me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Take, drink ye all of it; this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

These words of institution are recorded in Holy Scriptures four times that they might be the more clear and certain and important to us.

And these words were spoken, and this Sacrament was instituted, by our Lord Jesus Christ, the God-man, the True, the All-wise, the Almighty. He knows what He says; and whatever He says and promises He does and fulfills in truth. For He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we think.

The external, visible things and signs given us in this Sacrament, given us to eat and to drink, are bread and wine: bread, prepared of flour; and wine, of the fruit of the vine.

But what does Christ give us under these external things and signs in the Holy Supper?

In, with, and under the bread He gives us His true body; in, with, and under the wine He gives us His true blood. For so He says.—

God's pity! Again I must speak of false teachers and false doctrine.

In the Reformed church and all its daughter churches (Methodists, Evangelical Association, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, etc.) they teach that the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "This is my body, this is my blood" — are not to be taken in their

proper sense, but figuratively. In these churches they teach that bread and wine are mere emblems of Christ's body and blood and merely represent Christ's body and blood, so that under the bread and wine we only receive the figurative body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not His true body and His true blood. In these churches they teach that the Holy Supper has this meaning: As surely as we on earth with our mouths receive bread and wine, so surely the Lord Jesus Christ gives us the fruit of His suffering and death, if in taking the bread and wine we turn to Him in faith and remember Him. For, so say these churches, the body and blood of Christ the Lord is not on earth, but confined to some place far away in heaven.

But I say to you: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is on earth and in all places wherever He Himself is. You have learned this in the 15th chapter of Part Two of this book, from the Word of God. Jesus Christ, God and man, is with us always, even unto the end of the world. Where two or three are gathered together in His name, there is He in the midst of them. He ascended far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. Certainly our blind reason cannot grasp this.

And now: Why is it inadmissible to take the words, "This is my body," and, "This is my blood," in an improper or figurative sense, as these churches do?

1. Because Christ expressly says that He distributes to us *that* body *which is given for us*, and *that* blood *which is shed for us*. An emblem, or sign, of His body and blood has not been given and shed for us, but His true body and His true blood.

2. Because St. Paul expressly says, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the *communion* of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the *communion* of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor. 10, 16. Hence the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is distributed with the bread and wine. And the same Apostle says: "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the *body and blood of the Lord*," 1 Cor. 11, 27. Hence the body and blood of the Lord must be with the bread and the wine, and profanely taken by the unworthy.

3. Because said words are words of an institution of a divine ordinance and words of a divine testament.

For these reasons we may not twist and misconstrue these words, may not take them in an improper or figurative sense, but must take them as they stand, saying as they do that in the Holy Supper Christ gives us His true body and His true blood in, with, and under the bread and wine.

And now comes the Roman Catholic church, the church of the Pope.

This teaches firstly, that in the Lord's Supper bread and wine no longer remain, but are *changed* into the body and blood of Christ. For, say they, Christ, in giving the bread and wine to His disciples, said: "This is my body, this is my blood;" hence, say they, bread and wine have been changed into Christ's body and blood.

But St. Paul expressly teaches that while the Lord's Supper is being eaten and drunk the bread is still bread and the wine is still wine. For he says: "As often as ye eat this *bread*, and drink this *cup*, ye do show the Lord's death till He come. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that *bread*, and drink of that *cup*," 1 Cor. 11, 26. 28. And, as stated above, he says: "The *cup* of blessing which we bless, is it not the *communion* of the blood of Christ? The *bread* which we break, is it not the *communion* of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor. 10, 16. Hence in the Lord's Supper the bread is still bread and the wine is still wine; but in, with, and under the bread and wine Christ's body and blood is given.— When the Apostle says, John 1, 14: "The *Word*" (the Son of God) "was made *flesh*" (man) — does he therewith say that the Son of God was *changed* into a man? What a folly! So in this place the talk about change or "transubstantiation" is folly.

The Roman Catholic church furthermore teaches that the bread of the Lord's Supper must be worshiped, "*adored*," since it no longer is bread, but is changed into the body of the Lord.

But as the bread of the Lord's Supper is not changed, so it is not to be adored. The Lord Jesus Christ expressly tells us what He wants us to do with the bread and wine in the Holy Supper. We should eat and drink it that in, with, and under the same we might receive the Lord's body and blood.

The Roman Catholic church furthermore teaches that the bread, changed into the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, is to be offered, ever again, as an unbloody sacrifice for the sins of the

living and the dead. This is the service of the “mass,” or rather of idolatry, in the Roman Catholic church.

Yes, this is an abomination. “For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin,” Hebr. 10, 14. 18.

Lastly the Roman Catholic church mutilates the Lord’s Supper by *refusing the wine* to the communicants and *only giving them the bread*. Shamelessly they teach that it is not necessary to distribute the wine, since the body of Christ, distributed under the semblance of bread, already contains blood. But most expressly did our Lord say: “Drink ye *all* of it!” And Mark 14, 23 we read: “And they *all* drank of it.”

May this suffice as regards false teachers and doctrines. As you do in all doctrines of faith, so do also in the Lord’s Supper: follow the clear Word of God. Then you cannot be deceived or go astray.—

Let me tell you a little more about the eating and drinking in the Lord’s Supper.

You there eat and drink bread and wine with the mouth of the body in a most *natural* manner, just as other food. Together with the oral eating and drinking of the bread and wine you receive the body and blood of Christ. But in this act you take the body and blood of Christ in a *sacramental* manner, that is, in a manner obtaining nowhere but only in the Sacrament: in a *supernatural* manner, the like of which is found nowhere, and which no man can understand or find out. And if the Lord’s Supper is to be a blessing unto you, you must also eat and drink it in a *spiritual* manner, that is, in true faith, as I shall explain more fully later on.—

This Sacrament should be administered in the Christian Church forever, unto the day of judgment, and under the consecrated bread and wine the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ should be eaten and drunk. This Christ commands when He says, “This do in remembrance of me. This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.” And the Holy Spirit speaks thus through the Apostle Paul to all Christians: “As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till He come,” 1 Cor. 11, 26.

Our Lord’s Supper, the Lord’s Supper which is distributed in the Christian churches, truly is the Lord’s Supper and the true

Lord's Supper only *when it is administered according to Christ's institution.*

How is this?

In this order:

Let those who wish to partake of the Holy Supper announce themselves with their called servant of the Word, the pastor,— for thus only may the pastor know whether any or what Christians desire to receive the holy Sacrament at any one time. Then the pastor should, first of all, provide *bread* and *wine*, or cause others to provide it. Then he should *bless* or consecrate the bread and wine in the presence of the communicants, that is, he should speak the words over it with which Christ instituted the Lord's Supper. For the Word of God, and that word of God which pertains to just this thing, must, as you have learned, be connected with the external elements which Christ has commanded, if there is to be a Sacrament. Then the pastor should *distribute* the bread and wine, and the communicants should *eat and drink* it. And finally the congregation, through its pastor, should *confess that the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is received under the consecrated bread and wine.*

Wherever these parts are not found, or where any one of them is wanting, there is no Lord's Supper. For it is only where all these parts are found that the Lord's Supper is administered according to Christ's institution. Take good care, therefore, that the Lord's Supper is so administered in your church.—

The Lord's Supper should not be received once only, like Baptism, but *often*. Hereto we should be prompted by Christ's command. For He says in the words of the institution: "This do ye, *as oft* as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." And the Holy Spirit says through Paul the Apostle: "*As often* as ye eat this bread and drink this cup," 1 Cor. 11, 26. Furthermore we should be prompted thereto by Christ's promise, which tells us what grace He wants to give us in the Lord's Supper, whereof I shall speak in the next paragraph. Thirdly we should be prompted thereto by the trouble, the trouble of sin, which still lies heavily upon us and which is taken away in the Lord's Supper, as you will likewise see in the next paragraph. Therefore we are told of the first Christians at Jerusalem: "They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread" (the Lord's Supper), "and in prayer," Acts 2, 42. May God help you to do likewise!

Thou say'st: "This is my body; eat,
And orally receive me!
This is my blood; drink all of it,
And henceforth never leave me!"
What Thou hast spoken true must be:
Thou art almighty, and with Thee
Impossible is nothing.

Although my reason cannot see
How in so many places
Thy body at a time may be,
Yet faith Thy Word embraces.
How it can be I leave to Thee,
Thy Word alone sufficeth me,
For Thou wilt that we trust it.

* * *

SECONDLY, OF THE BENEFIT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Dr. Luther says: "What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?"

And he answers: "That is shown us by these words, 'Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins,' namely, that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there also is life and salvation."

If you wish to know what benefit a medicine that is offered to you is expected to give you, you will ask why the doctor is giving it to you. And when you ask, What is the benefit of the eating and drinking of the body and blood of the Lord under the bread and wine? you should ask why the Lord Jesus Christ gave you His body and His blood. In answer you hear the words: "Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins." So from these words you know that in the Lord's Supper *forgiveness of sins* is given you through the eating and drinking of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine. And this forgiveness of sins is given you in the Sacrament *through these words*. For what Jesus, our Lord, says and promises He also does.

But these words say nothing of life and salvation, and Dr. Luther says that also life and salvation is given you through these words. How is this?

Dr. Luther rightly says: "Where there is forgiveness of sins, there is *also life and salvation*."

With His body which on the cross He gave into death for us, and with His blood which He shed for us, the Lord Jesus Christ

has purchased forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation for all men. This body and this blood the Lord now in the Holy Supper gives to every one that eats and drinks, as a seal of the remission of his sins and of life and salvation.

The body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the precious ransom wherewith the Lord redeemed the whole world, purchased and won it from all sins, from death, and from the power of the Devil. This precious ransom the Lord Jesus in the Holy Supper gives to every one that eats and drinks, that such a person might have and hold it as his actual personal property. So it is clear that in the Holy Supper the Lord Jesus Christ gives to everyone that eats and drinks His body and His blood — to what end? Unto the most certain assurance of the forgiveness of his sins, of life and salvation.

How mightily is our poor faith strengthened by partaking of the Lord's Supper!

Must not this wonderful grace of God which we experience in the Lord's Supper serve towards furthering us in holiness of life, wherewith we praise and honor God for His grace?

And, taking the Lord's Supper in common with our fellow-Christians, how greatly must the Christian love to our brethren and sisters in Christ the Lord be quickened and strengthened! For here the word applies: "For we being many are *one bread*, and *one body*: for we are all partakers of that one bread," 1 Cor. 10, 17. We are all partakers of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Supper, and are thereby united with one another a thousand times more closely than by near bodily relationship.

And, finally, by such joint partaking of the Lord's Supper we witness publicly that we are of one faith. Hence, of course, we should commune only with those who are with us in the communion of the one true faith and confession.

I hope that now you know what is the benefit of such eating and drinking.

O Living Bread from heaven,
How hast Thou fed Thy guest!
The gifts Thou now hast given
Have filled my heart with rest.
O wondrous food of blessing!
O cup that heals our woes!
My heart, this gift possessing,
In thankful song o'erflows.

My Lord, Thou here hast led me
Within Thy holiest place,
And there Thyself hast fed me
With treasures of Thy grace:
And Thou hast freely given
What earth could never buy,
The Bread of Life from heaven,
That now I shall not die.

* * *

THIRDLY, OF THE POWER OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Dr. Luther asks: "How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?"

And he answers: "It is not the eating and drinking, indeed, that does them, but the words here written, 'Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins,' which words, beside the bodily eating and drinking, are as the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he that believes these words has what they say and express, namely, forgiveness of sins."

Let us consider these words a little.

When you consider that through the eating and drinking in the Holy Supper forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given you, you are inclined to ask: How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?

In answer to this we must say: It is not the eating and drinking, indeed, that does them. That would be an altogether carnal, coarse, rude, and heathenish opinion, to hold that by mere eating and drinking we receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Whoever presents this as our opinion wrongs us greatly.

And yet, through the eating and drinking in the Holy Supper forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us. What is the correct understanding of this?

Through the divine words: "Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins," these great things are placed into the Lord's Supper and offered to every one who there eats and drinks — just as through the divine Word the selfsame things are put into holy Baptism and offered to every one that is baptized. Therefore these divine words, beside the bodily eating and drinking, are as the chief thing in the Sacrament.

But does everyone who eats and drinks the Lord's Supper receive and hold and possess these great things: forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation?

No, indeed! This, too, would be a very carnal, a very coarse, rude, and heathenish opinion to hold. And also he who represents this as our opinion wrongs us greatly.

It is this way:—

It is true that every one to whom the Sacrament is imparted according to Christ's instruction receives the body and blood of Christ under the bread and wine. Thereby to everyone is offered forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. But only he receives, holds, and possesses these great things in faith *who believes these words*: “Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins.” Wherever God, through the means of grace, gives and offers to us forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, there we should believe, and in faith accept. Otherwise we do not really have what God gives us.

Lord, I believe in simple trust,
Strength in my weakness give me,
For I am naught but sinful dust,
Nor of Thy Word bereave me!
Thy Baptism, Supper, and Thy Word,
My consolation are, O Lord,
For they contain my treasure.

* * *

FOURTHLY, OF THE SALUTARY USE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

From the preceding paragraph it must be clear to you that the mere outward partaking of this Sacrament is not sufficient. It must also be received *rightly* and *worthily*, if we would receive the great and salutary benefit offered to us through it.

This is what Dr. Luther would impress upon us, and he therefore lastly asks: “Who, then, receives such Sacrament worthily?”

And his answer is: “Fasting and bodily preparation is, indeed, a fine outward training; but he is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words, “Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins. But he that does not believe these words, or doubts, is unworthy and unprepared; for the words, ‘For you,’ require all hearts to believe.”

Let us consider what Luther here says.

What prompted Luther to treat in a separate question of the true worthiness with which men should partake of the Lord's Supper, was doubtless the word of the Holy Ghost which He spoke by St. Paul the Apostle: “Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth

and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body," 1 Cor. 11, 28. 29.

Just see how pressingly the Holy Ghost demands that we should partake of the Lord's Supper with true worthiness! We should first carefully examine ourselves, says He, as to whether we are truly worthy to receive this most sacred Sacrament. For, says He, he that receives the Holy Supper unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, because he thoughtlessly and insolently profanes the body and blood of the Lord which is offered to him in the Holy Supper, and which he there receives under the consecrated bread, even as the blood of the Lord under the consecrated cup.

Who, then, receives such Sacrament worthily?

To fast beforehand and prepare one's self bodily, to appear modestly and reverently at the Lord's Table,—all this is indeed a fine training and a commendable custom. But all this is merely something outward, which the hypocrite and the wicked may perform as well.

Who, then, receives such Sacrament worthily?

Only and exclusively he is truly worthy and well prepared who has *faith* in these words: "*Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins.*"

Jesus is the Savior of sinners. He has purchased forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation for us poor sinners. He offers us this grace and these gifts through the means of grace,—also in the Lord's Supper through those glorious words: "*Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins.*" Any miserable sinner whatever that believes these words and with faith in these words comes to the Lord's Supper that he might receive the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation through Jesus Christ, is truly worthy and well prepared. There is no other worthiness. Our dear Lord demands no other worthiness. Rejoice, O sinner! You need but believe that the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is given for you for the remission of sins. And thus you should come, come to the Lord's Supper, and there receive the body and blood of the Lord under the consecrated bread and wine, unto forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Yes, thus you are truly worthy and well prepared.

But he that does not believe these words: "*Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins,*" or doubts them; he that pro-

fanely despises the Lord Jesus Christ; or he that means to work out his own salvation, without the Lord Jesus Christ, by his own righteousness and good works; or he that is indifferent about his sins and the Lord Jesus Christ; or he that says in his heart, Who knows whether there is any truth in all this story about Jesus, the Savior of sinners! — or he that approaches the Lord's Supper for mere appearance' sake and in hypocrisy: — he is unworthy and unprepared. For the blessed, gracious, inviting divine words: "*For you,*" require all hearts to believe.

Therefore, examine yourself before approaching the Lord's Table, as to whether you may worthily receive this Sacrament.

Examine yourself *whether you repent of your sins.* For without true repentance of your sins you cannot have true faith in the words: "*Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins.*"

Examine yourself *whether you believe in Jesus Christ,* who gave His body and shed His blood for you for the remission of sins, and who gives you His body and His blood in the Holy Supper unto the remission of sins.

Examine yourself *whether you have the good and earnest purpose, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, henceforth to mend your sinful life.* For without such purpose neither your repentance nor your faith can be true.

To lead you to such self-examination our church observes the custom of holding confessional or preparatory services before the administration of the Lord's Supper, wherein you are admonished unto such self-examination.

I repeat: Before you approach the Lord's Table, examine yourself whether you receive the Sacrament worthily, that is, whether you have the true faith of miserable sinners in these words: "*Given, and shed for you for the remission of sins.*"

By such self-examination you may find that your faith is weak; that you are tempted and tormented with unbelief; that your faith is like a bruised reed which, weak and withered, droops its head instead of striving upward in jubilant strength; that your faith is like a smoking flax that gives but a little light and is all but quenched. Then in misery and despair you might say: "*Alas, may I, too, approach the Lord's Table? Oh, I dare not! Certainly I am not worthy and well prepared! Will the dear Lord accept one as miserable as myself? If only I had a strong true faith in my Savior and in all His grace?*"

May you go to the Lord's Supper when in such a condition?

Certainly! Most assuredly! Those particularly who are weak in faith are to come to the Lord's Supper, that their faith may be strengthened, for the Lord's Supper makes the faith strong. Even as the sick should go to the physician and take medicine, so should the sick in faith come to the Lord Jesus Christ and partake of the Holy Supper.

"Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!" — thus, of a time, a man said to Jesus. And the Lord helped him. Mark 9, 24. So should you likewise speak when in weak faith you come to the Lord's Supper. And the Lord will help you — through the Holy Supper.

"The *meek* shall eat and be satisfied," says the Holy Ghost, Ps. 22, 26. Apply this to the Lord's Supper.

"A *bruised reed* shall He not break, and the *smoking flax* shall He not quench," says the Holy Ghost, Is. 42, 3. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," says the Lord Jesus, John 6, 37. Here you have God's answer to the question: May those who are weak in faith approach the Lord's Table?

But the Lord's Supper must be *denied*, 1) *to such as are known to be ungodly and impenitent*. You know that. For their sins would not be forgiven but retained. And Jesus, our Lord, says: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine," Matt. 7, 6.

The Lord's Supper must be *denied*, 2) *to the heterodox*, that is, to those who do not confess the true, but a wrong faith. Be sure to understand. Such heterodox may be believing children of God. The false doctrines may cling to them merely from the wrong instruction they have received. But since the joint partaking of the Lord's Supper is a token and testimony of the unity of faith, the heterodox must not partake of the Lord's Supper together with us — nor we together with them. Should, for instance, a member of a Reformed church be permitted to go to the Lord's Supper with us, even though he does not believe that in the Lord's Supper the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is given and received, and, furthermore, does not believe that thereby we receive forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation? Certainly not. We do not judge or condemn such a person. For all his false doctrine he may be a child of God. But we cannot go

to the Lord's Supper with him. And least of all may we go to the Lord's Supper in a Reformed church. Is not this plain?

The Lord's Supper must be *denied*, 3) *to such as have given offense and have not yet made amends*. By an "offense" we mean any word or deed by which others are tempted to sin; a stumbling-block. If any one has given such offense, he should first remove it, make amends for it. A Christian will gladly do this. A Christian will certainly not persist in a thing whereby others are tempted to sin!

The Lord's Supper must be *denied*, 4) *to such as are not able to examine themselves*, as, for instance, children, and persons lying in a state of unconsciousness, and the totally insane. Baptized children are the children of God. But they must first learn the Word of God before they are able to examine themselves in accordance with the demands of the Holy Spirit. Then shall they be admitted to the Lord's Supper. And if there is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in the hearts of the unconscious and the totally insane, they are saved, even though they are not in a condition to receive the Lord's Supper.

May the faithful and merciful God grant you His Holy Spirit that in the Lord's Supper you may at all times in true faith, under the bread and wine, receive the body and the blood of your beloved Savior unto the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, and unto the abundant strengthening of your faith, which here on earth is constantly tempted.

Hasten as a bride to meet Him,
And with loving reverence greet Him,
For with words of life immortal
Now He knocketh at thy portal;
Haste to ope the gates before Him,
Saying, while thou dost adore Him,
"Suffer, Lord, that I receive Thee,
And I never more will leave Thee."

Sun, who all my life dost brighten,
Light, who dost my soul enlighten,
Joy, the sweetest man e'er knoweth,
Fount, whence all my being floweth,—
At Thy feet I cry, my Maker,
Let me be a fit partaker
Of this blessed food from heaven,
For our good, Thy glory, given.

CHAPTER IX.

A Few Closing Remarks on Confirmation.

Children who are born of truly Christian parents are straightway brought to holy Baptism where they are born again of the water and the Spirit, so that now they are believing and dear children of God and heirs of eternal life.

Now, even as these children are nourished bodily with milk and other food, that they might not die, but live and grow and become strong and sturdy, so must they, likewise, as soon as it can be done, be nourished spiritually with the milk and food of God's Word. If this is not done, they die spiritually, and cannot grow and become strong and sturdy in faith, nor can they inherit eternal life. Therefore Christian parents must make it their most solemn concern to make their baptized children strong and sturdy in faith unto eternal life by means of the Word of God.

What are they to do to effect this?

They should relate to their children the beautiful and divinely powerful Bible stories in all simplicity, cause them to love and esteem their Savior, and teach them to pray.

Wherever it is at all possible they should send their children to a truly Christian school, wherein the children are instructed by Christian teachers in the doctrines of the divine and saving Word, as well as in the various useful branches of knowledge. Wherever this cannot by any means be done the parents should be careful, and most energetically careful, to have their children instructed daily and regularly in the Word of God.

As the children grow up the parents should put them under the instruction of the pastor, that he, as watching over their souls, might rehearse the entire doctrine of God's Word with them and make the children firm in the true faith.

After all this is done, our church, following an old and commendable custom, places the children before the congregation, has them give an account of the faith that is in them, and confess the same, whereupon the benediction is pronounced upon them before the congregation, and they are hereafter admitted to the Lord's Supper as such that are able to examine themselves.

This is called *Confirmation*. Thus children are *confirmed*.

To "confirm" means to make firm, that is, to *make firm in the faith*.

The principal thing in Confirmation is not the public ceremony just mentioned as being very commendable, but in Confirmation the principal thing is the careful instruction in the Word of God, by which the children should previously, as stated above, be confirmed, made firm, in faith. Unless such right instruction in the Word of God has gone before, the final public ceremony of Confirmation is a hollow and profane show.

* * *

May you too, dear reader, be made firm, confirmed, in faith through this book, that you, too, might give account of the faith that is in you, cheerfully confess the same, and be a true member of the Church of God here in time and hereafter in eternity. May God graciously grant this for Christ's sake! Amen.

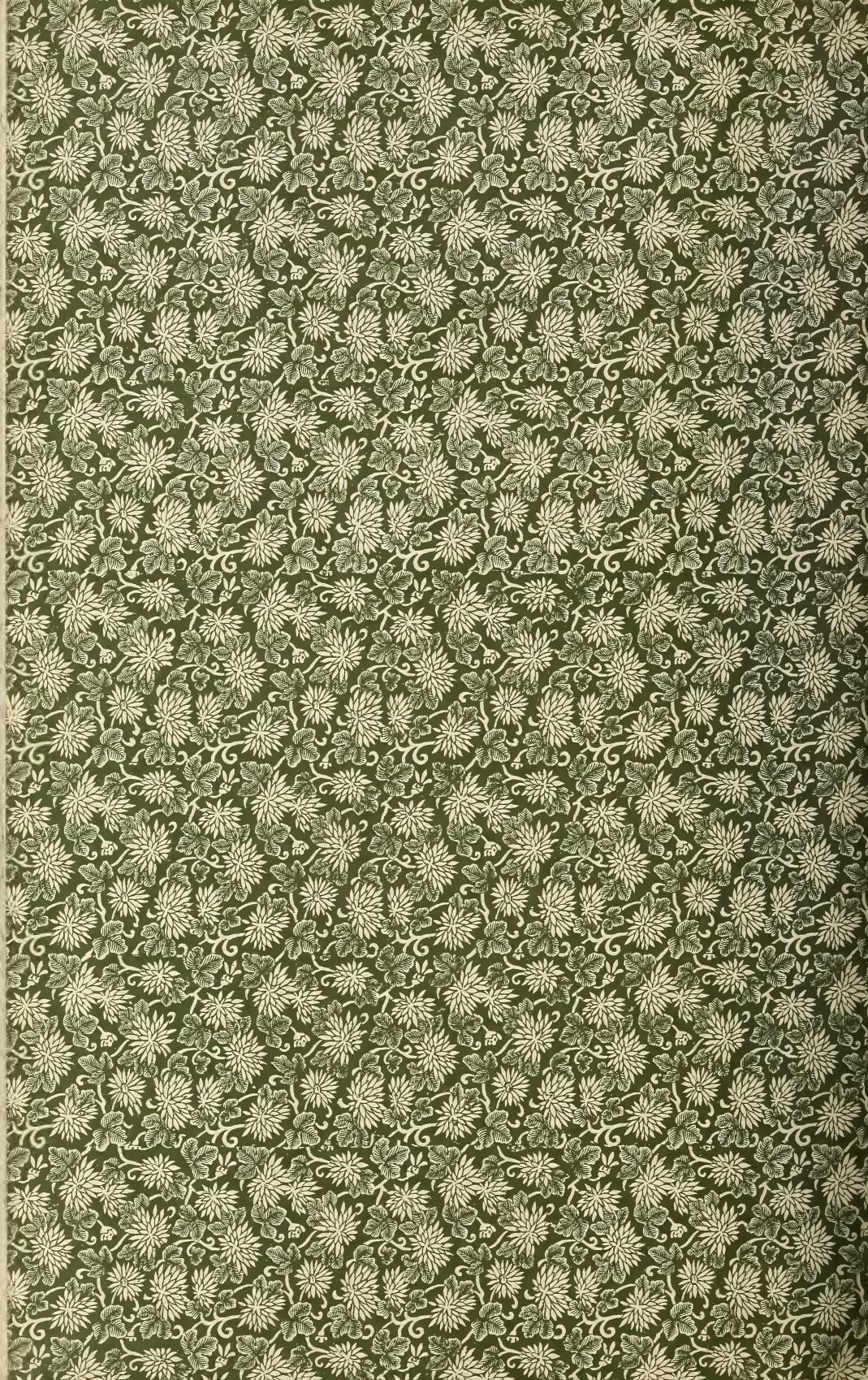
Lord, grant that we e'er pure retain
The catechismal doctrine plain,
As Luther taught the heavenly truth
In simple words to tender youth.

That we Thy holy Law may know
And mourn our sin and all its woe,
And yet believe in Father, Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One.

That we on Thee, our Father, call
Who canst and wilt give help to all;
That as Thy children we may live,
Whom Thou in Baptism didst receive.

That, if we fall, we rise again,
Repentingly confess our sin,
And take the Sacrament in faith; —
Amen. God grant a happy death!

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